

 BRITAIN'S **BEST** MILITARY HISTORY MAGAZINE

HISTORY *of* WAR



**NAPOLEON'S
CLOSE CALL**

Marengo, 1800

BATTLE FOR ITALY

EXCLUSIVE James Holland on the Allied blunders and logistical triumphs

PLUS Devil's Brigade: Special Forces unit that wrought havoc at Anzio



JAPAN VS KOREA

Understanding over three centuries of rivalry, conquest and resistance



INSIDE THE F-16 FALCON

Why this iconic aircraft is still among the world's deadliest all-round fighters



ROOSEVELT'S ROUGH RIDERS

Read the heroic story behind the president's legendary cavalry unit



DISCOVER THE WHOLE PICTURE

When you explore your family tree, you find names, dates and places. But it's the extra details that truly reveal your family story.

Ancestry has a huge range of historical records, and with an average of two million added every day, there's always more to discover. So even when you think you know your family, they can keep surprising you.

 **ancestry**
Bring your backstory to life™

**Do you have a
fascinating family
story to share?**

We'd love to hear about
your discoveries, email us at
yourstory@ancestry.co.uk

*Record collections subject to change.

October Record Highlights*

U.S., Order Sons of Italy in America News,
1953-1995 – **NEW**

Rostock, Germany, Parish Register Transcripts,
1580-1945 – **UPDATED**

Pyrénées-Orientales, France, Censuses, 1806-1936 – **NEW**



**SCAN TO GET
OUR WEEKLY
NEWSLETTER**



CONTRIBUTORS



MIGUEL MIRANDA

This issue Miguel takes us through the complex but critical history of two regional rivals: Korea and Japan. He recounts the often brutal and violent conflicts between the two nations, from Medieval conquest to imperial occupation (p.12).



DAVID SMITH

During his invasion of Italy, Napoleon was caught on the back foot by an Austrian army he thought he had trapped. Outgunned, but not out-thought, Napoleon summoned all his skill to turn the Battle of Marengo back in his favour (p. 42).



ALEX BOWERS

The US-Canadian First Special Service Force, better known to history as the Devil's Brigade, was a short-lived unit that sowed chaos and destruction behind enemy lines, from Anzio to the south of France. Alex recalls their short but fascinating story on page 38.

Above: Navy and Marine personnel take part in amphibious landing exercises, 1943

Welcome

1 943 was a pivotal year for the Allies, who after defeating Axis forces in North Africa in the spring, turned to the invasion and liberation of occupied Europe. The 'soft underbelly' Churchill had long advocated as the weak point in the Axis-held territories, was finally being pressed, first with the invasion of Sicily, which formed a stepping-stone to the Italian peninsula. This issue, *History of War* is privileged to welcome back James Holland, whose latest book *Savage Storm* recounts the battle for Italy, both at the operation level, as well as the experiences of the men on the ground. On page 24 he describes how the under-resourced invasion force faced a gruelling and bloody slog against determined German defenders.

Tim Williamson
Editor-in-Chief

SUBSCRIBE & SAVE!

Take advantage of our fantastic subscription offers and get *History of War* for less than half price!

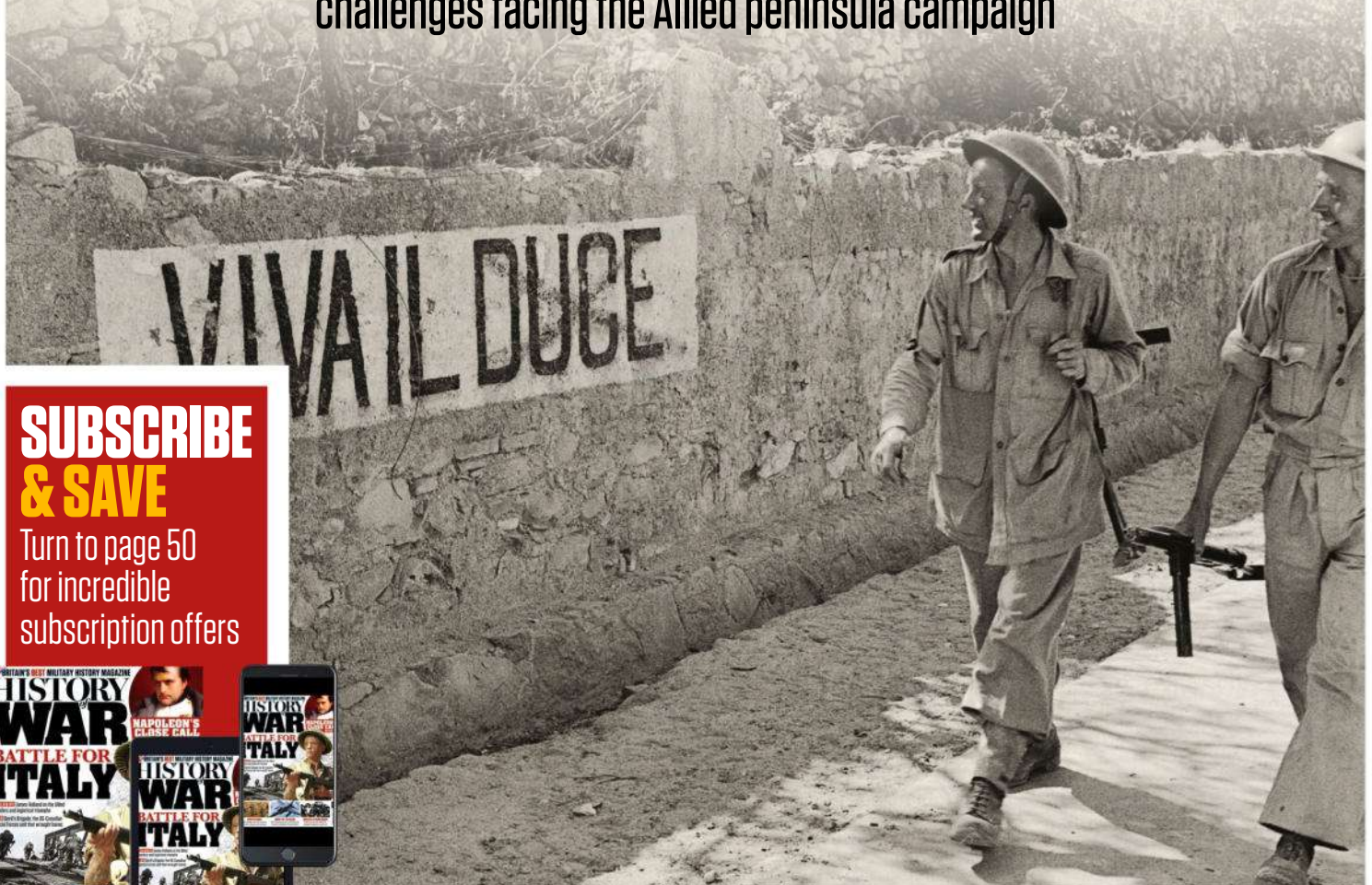


**TURN TO
PAGE 50**



BATTLE FOR ITALY

24 James Holland recounts the immense logistical and operational challenges facing the Allied peninsula campaign



**SUBSCRIBE
& SAVE**

Turn to page 50
for incredible
subscription offers



FRONTLINE

JAPAN VS KOREA

12 TIMELINE

For centuries, these regional rival powers were locked in a bloody series of conflicts and conquest

16 SURVIVAL AT ALL COSTS

During the medieval period, the Korean peninsula was fortified against its powerful neighbour

18 CONQUEST AND COLONISATION

After the demise of the Edo shogunate, an expansionist Japan set its sights on Korea as the jewel in its imperial crown

20 LEADERS AND COMMANDERS

Many military figures and politicians impacted and influenced the centuries-long struggle

22 GUERRILLAS AND DICTATORS

Occupation in 1910 began a decades-long resistance that eventually ripped Korea apart



12

06 WAR IN FOCUS

Stunning imagery from throughout history

24 1943: BATTLE FOR ITALY

James Holland recounts the gruelling Allied campaign against Axis forces

30 BRITAIN'S MAN IN BERLIN

Incredible story of the adventurer-academic who was the first to expose Hitler's plans

34 ROOSEVELT'S RIDERS

The legendary US president's wartime exploits

38 THE DEVIL'S BRIGADE

In its brief but bloody deployment, this US-Canadian unit spread fear among Axis forces

GREAT BATTLES

42 MARENGO, 1800

A surprise attack from an Austrian army almost thwarts Napoleon's campaign in North Italy

MEDAL OF HONOR HEROES

52 SMEDLEY BUTLER

Incredible story of a Quaker turned Marine hero

OPERATOR'S HANDBOOK

56 F-16 FIGHTING FALCON

In the cockpit of the USA's iconic multi-role fighter



56



38



64

63 HOMEFRONT

64 MUSEUMS AND EVENTS

A roundup of activities and exhibitions

66 Q&A: ANGUS KONSTAM

Inside the attack on convoy HG-76

70 WWII THIS MONTH

Key Second World War events in photos,

72 REVIEWS

The latest military history books and films

76 COMPETITION

Your chance to win a copy of Victory to Defeat

78 INTERVIEW: ANDY MCNAB

The veteran and author on his latest book

82 ARTEFACT OF WAR

A wonderfully preserved stitchwork art created by an American pilot POW

WAR_{in} **FOCUS**

AN UNDERWATER DISCOVERY

20 May 2011

The frame of a Mitsubishi A6M Zero fighter aircraft can be made out on the sea floor, where it crashed almost 70 years ago. The Zero was found by photographer Christopher Hamilton 185ft (56m) underwater in the Pacific Ocean, near the Solomon Islands. Hamilton found the crash site in collaboration with locals in 2011, and also discovered the wreckage of an American Grumman F6F Hellcat and Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress nearby. Some of the aircraft photographed by Hamilton contain the remains of their crew members, casualties of a fierce battle during the Second World War.





WAR_{in} **FOCUS**

HAGANAH WOMEN TRAINING

7 August 1948

Members of Israel's paramilitary Haganah organisation practise shooting Sten machine guns during the Arab-Israeli War (1948-49). After the British departed from Palestine in 1948, Jewish forces previously operating underground emerged to serve the newly created state of Israel. They were armed with Sten guns, favoured because of their simple design and low cost. Stens came to Israel through two routes: Haganah volunteers serving in the British Army during the Second World War and bringing guns back, and operatives from the Shai intelligence unit of Haganah working directly with the British Special Operations Executive.





WARⁱⁿ FOCUS

A PAWS IN BATTLE

19 July 1918

An officer of the 444th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA), enjoys some downtime with his pipe and a kitten near Arras in July 1918. The Siege Batteries were equipped with a range of heavy howitzers, from 6-inch to 12-inch. The shells used by the Siege Batteries neutralised enemy assets behind the lines, such as strongholds, arms dumps, roads and railways.

Considering this gun's location in July 1918, it may have seen action in the upcoming Second Battle of Arras (August-September 1918).



TIMELINE OF

JAPAN vs KOREA

For almost 2,000 years the Korean peninsula battled attempts by foreign invaders to conquer its entire territory

THE WARRIOR EMPRESS 02

The Empress Jingu leads an invasion of Silla and overruns its capital. She returns to Japan with much fanfare and plunder. The historiography of this conflict is muddled but it is deemed a starting point for examining Japan-Korea relations.

200 CE

33 BCE

FIRST ENCOUNTER 01

Japan's imperial records reveal a minor expedition to assist a beleaguered rival of the Silla kingdom along the peninsula's southern coast. It is claimed Japanese troops are left behind to protect their local allies. The event is inauspicious and has little effect on regional politics.

The Silla ruled the eastern half of the Korean peninsula for several hundred years and imbued its people with foreign influences such as Buddhism

RISE OF JOSEON 03

A military leader of the Goryeo kingdom organises a coup d'etat to avert war with China's Ming Dynasty. The new government imposes strict social controls and a hierarchy between learned aristocrats known as yangban and commoners. The new era is threatened by imperial Japan's constant belligerence.

The enduring monument of the Joseon era is its imperial palace, twice rebuilt and still being restored today

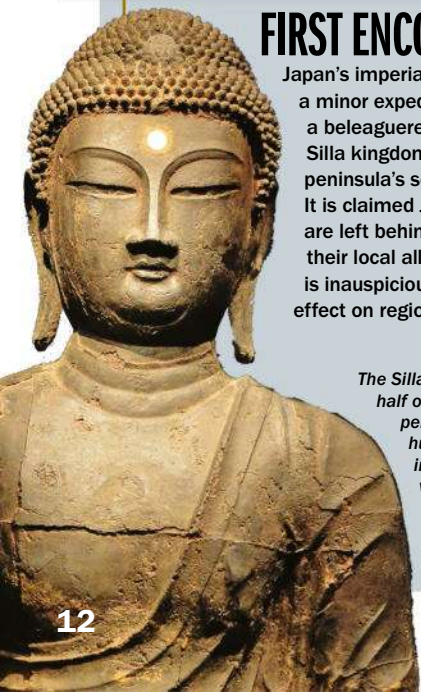
1392

1443

THE GYAHAE TREATY 04

Joseon emissaries contact the Japanese samurai in Tsushima, an island chain a day's journey from Kyushu, to establish trade. The resulting agreement allows the royal court in Hanyang to conduct informal diplomacy with both Japan's imperial court and the Ashikaga shogunate, whose power is crumbling.

Located in the strait separating the peninsula from Japan's main islands, Tsushima served as a gateway to Japan



Perhaps the first of Japan's quasi-historical warrior women, Empress Jingu was not just victorious in war but also is alleged to have lived to the age of 100

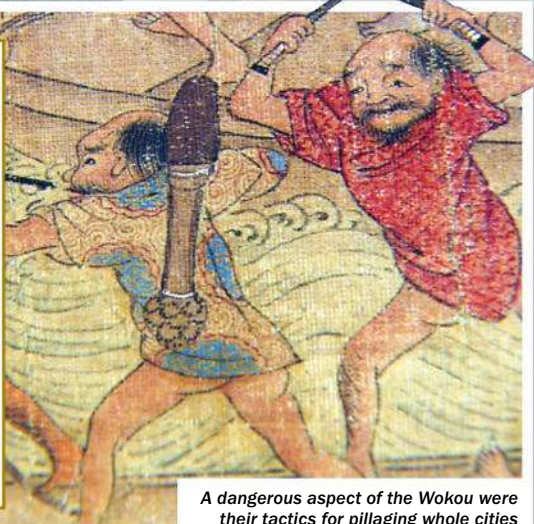
RISE OF TOYOTOMI HIDEYOSHI

Having climbed the ranks of the warlord Oda Nobunaga's army during the late Sengoku era, the commander known as Hideyoshi earns the imperial court's favour and is made regent. Although his role is ambiguous his ambitions are not; the conquest of East Asia captivates him.

While he never attained the title 'shogun', Hideyoshi is remembered as one of Japan's great warriors

PIRATES UNLEASHED

In a clear sign of the worsening relations with Japan, constant raids by the Wokou pirates begin to impact regional security as far as southern China and the violence peaks in 1555. The Joseon court blames Japan's leaders for failing to curb the problem. A naval arms race begins in earnest to defeat the Wokou.



A dangerous aspect of the Wokou were their tactics for pillaging whole cities

THE DREADED INVASION 05

At least 150,000 samurai overrun southern Korea in a matter of weeks, forcing the ruling monarch to flee the capital. The invasion orchestrated by the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi is fuelled by hubris and dreams of national prestige. A naval fleet of galleys and barges sustains the invasion force.



16th century Japan's militarised society boasted the best-trained ground force in Asia

16th century

1555

1586

1592

May-September 1592

THE WOKOU SCOURGE

The Joseon exercise strict control over the realm's harbours and borderlands. However, this does not discourage marauders from the eastern seas. The Wokou, comically known as 'dwarf pirates', are considered renegade samurai who reap profits from hijacking merchandise along Korea's eastern seaboard and elsewhere.



To this day the identity of Wokou pirates remains elusive. Were they Chinese? European? Or multinational rascals?

NAVAL SUPREMACY

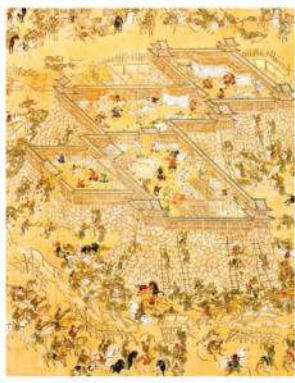
The naval formations led by Admiral Yi Sun-sin wreak havoc on Japan's maritime logistics during engagements in Sancheon and Hansando. The Koreans benefit from their fully armoured galleys, or 'turtle ships', that are impervious to Japanese gunfire. Although the war continues for several years, Yi Sun-sin's unfailing dedication cripples Japan's territorial control over the peninsula.



Only modern reproductions of the 'turtle ships' exist today. During the Imjin War from 1592-95 they gave Korea's navy a lethal edge over the Japanese



1597



Superior numbers allowed the Ming-Joseon coalition to drive the Japanese out of their last enclave on the peninsula

MING DYNASTY ATTACKS 06

Having ascertained Japan's intentions to use Korea as a staging post for an assault on China, the Ming Dynasty joins the war and sends 100,000 troops across the Yalu River. The Japanese are pushed back to their garrison forts in Ulsan and Pusan (known today as Busan) and are defeated at sea. The dictator Toyotomi Hideyoshi succumbs to old age the following year.

1607

TRIBUTE AND DIPLOMACY 07

To improve ties with Japan and reduce the threat posed by the new Tokugawa shogunate, the Joseon court sends envoys to Tsushima and the samurai clans of Kyushu bearing gifts and merchandise. This becomes a formal protocol in the next 100 years, with similar deliveries made to the Qing imperial court in China and the distant kingdom of Ryukyu in the Okinawa archipelago.

1866

THE UNWELCOME AMERICANS 08

Having forced a commercial treaty with Japan in the 1850s, another small American expedition attempts to open trade with the Joseon court, albeit with resulting mayhem. Deep-rooted suspicion and inflexible border controls mean that even under pressure the royal court does not allow Americans, or any Europeans, access to the peninsula.



A few years after the merchantman General Sherman was set alight the United States Marine Corps fought the Korean garrison in Gangwha/Kangwha Island

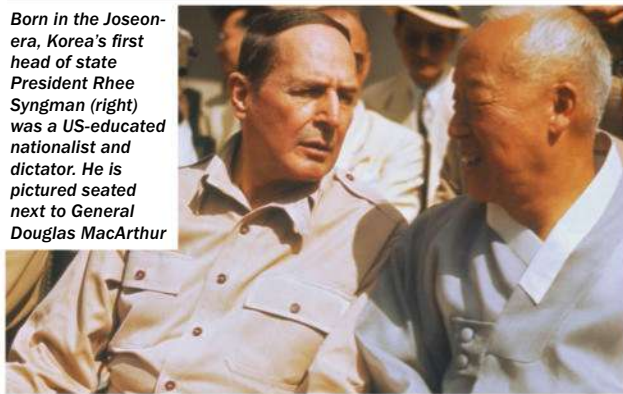
JAPAN DOMINATES 11

The entire Korean peninsula comes under Japanese control as the neighbouring Qing empire disintegrates. Every vestige of the impotent late Joseon government is erased. Census data and property laws are altered to suit Japanese administrative practices, and the Korean language and its cultural offshoots are suppressed.

Japanese imperialism infantilised Korea as a backward culture that must be civilised



Born in the Joseon-era, Korea's first head of state President Rhee Syngman (right) was a US-educated nationalist and dictator. He is pictured seated next to General Douglas MacArthur



A DIVIDED FUTURE 14

After Japan's defeat in 1945 the Korean government-in-exile seizes control of the southern territory occupied by US troops. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union installs the former guerrilla Kim Il-sung as leader in Pyongyang. A full-scale invasion across the 38th parallel is soon being readied.

UNDER A FOREIGN YOKE 10

The victorious conclusion of its war with Russia from 1904-05 leaves at least 50,000 Japanese soldiers in the Korean peninsula. The Joseon royal court is a shadow of its former self and commands little authority. Life for their Korean subjects is now controlled by Japanese laws and oversight.



Japan paid a steep price after 16 months of grinding combat against the Russian empire

THE NEW DOMINION 12

After a decade of martial rule overseen by Tokyo's generals the 'March 1st Movement' erupts and reminds the colonial authorities how much they are resented. In a telling sign of Japan's colonial strategy, an administrative office is erected within the former Gyeongbokgung, or Gyeongbok, royal palace complex. This is seen as an affront to the memory and significance of the Joseon era.

The Japanese 'government building' was a colonial edifice symbolising Tokyo's rule over Korea



1894

1905

1910

1 March 1919

1 January 1921

15 August 1948

FIRST SINO-JAPANESE WAR 09

A newly industrialised imperial Japan goes to war against China, whose crumbling Qing government is perceived as corrupt and inept. Japanese forces arrive on the Korean peninsula once more in July, 300 years after their last invasion. By September they reach Pyongyang and drive away its Chinese garrison, then cross over to Manchuria, where the Russians await.



This woodblock print depicts oafish Chinese troops scattering at the sight of stern Japanese soldiers

Coincidentally, China's fledgling communist movement was first organised in Shanghai in 1921



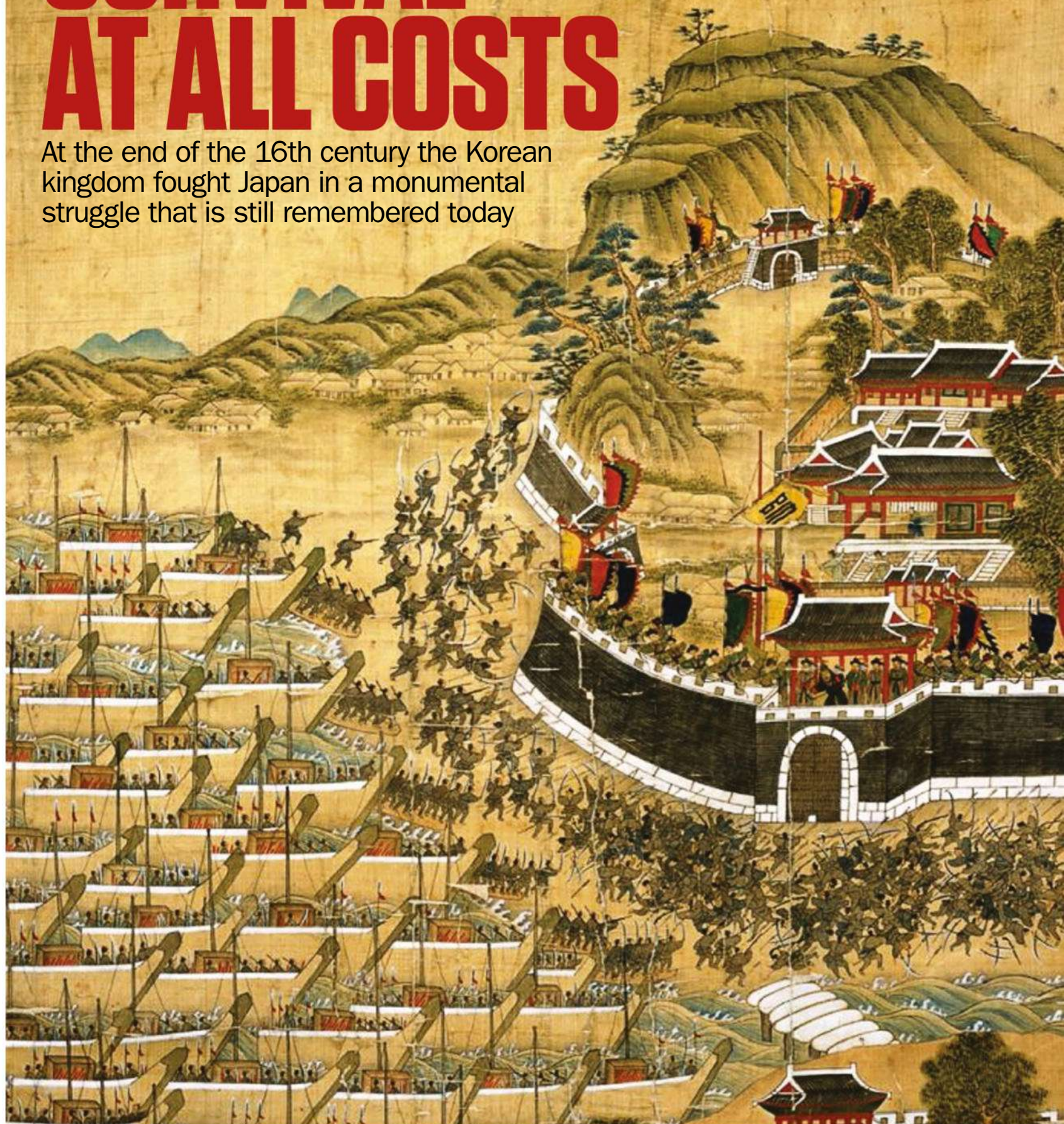
PATRIOTS AND RADICALS 13

Korean exiles gather in the coastal metropolis of Shanghai, China, and formalise a provisional government that is founded in 1919 after the March 1st revolt. Even without international support the clique establishes its leadership structure, but differences remain over armed insurrection or a compromise with Japan for total Korean independence.

Frontline

SURVIVAL AT ALL COSTS

At the end of the 16th century the Korean kingdom fought Japan in a monumental struggle that is still remembered today



The recurring challenge that weighed on pre-modern Korea, no matter its leadership, was establishing harmony between China and Japan. The Goryeo dynasty (918 – 1392) stayed independent through peace with the Yuan dynasty but was under threat from the Ming dynasty by the late 1300s. In a bid to quell domestic unrest and normalise ties with the Chinese, a Goryeo general named Yi Seong-gye overthrew his monarch. Yi began his reign as King Taejo in 1394 and the new Joseon dynasty's capital Hanyang (modern-day Seoul) relocated farther away from the northern border as a precaution, and is where the Gyeongbokgung Palace complex was erected for his descendants.

The five centuries of the Joseon-era are characterised by its adherence to Chinese philosophical values and a feudal hierarchy. A lasting achievement was preserving its territorial extent and independence despite difficult circumstances. Of course, the duration of 518 years saw its fair share of inadequate rulers, including the 19th century monarchs who were helpless against foreign threats. But it was not until 200 years after its founding that Korea endured a weak king and a ruinous invasion by Japan concocted by the power-mad Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the dreaded taiko. He enthralled the once quarrelsome civil war era (1467 – 1568) samurai clans and sent them off to war.

The struggle against Japan, known as the Imjin War (1592-98), is a Korean national epic of sorts memorialised and retold with its own heroes and villains. The courageous

admiral Yi Sun-sin was a main protagonist leading the outnumbered Joseon fleet against daunting odds. In reality, it helped that Korean shipbuilding at the time could rival that of European countries such as England or Spain. From a technological standpoint, there was a remarkable quantity of ships and cannon in East Asia, the latter being a technology the Joseon excelled at since the kingdom had to fend off hostile nomads along its northern frontier, as well as the Wokou pirates who marauded its seas. Joseon's state-owned foundries mastered casting heavy guns, one particular model having a bore of 5in (130mm), and different kinds of ammunition.

The kingdom's focus on border security and coastal fortresses meant it neglected a large standing army. As a result, a few thousand garrison troops were unable to withstand the Japanese assault on Pusan just a day's sailing from Tsushima. In spite of Japan's military prowess (some 400,000 samurai were committed to the war across seven years) and the Joseon capital being almost razed in 1592, Joseon's arsenal and loyal subjects blunted the enemy's progress.

Until China sent its own troops in 1593 and again in 1597, the patriotism of the Korean Yangban aristocracy and Buddhist temples mobilised peasants as irregular formations. These grew into a cohesive people's army that Japan had never faced before. Another problem for the invaders were the ranged weapons the Joseon possessed, in the absence of musketry. This included light cannon that fired shrapnel and the fearsome singijeon launcher

loaded with arrows. This wooden artillery piece supported by a simple wheeled carriage was transported with ease and readied at a safe distance from the enemy. When armed and lit it could saturate Japanese barricades, ships and fortifications with fiery darts.

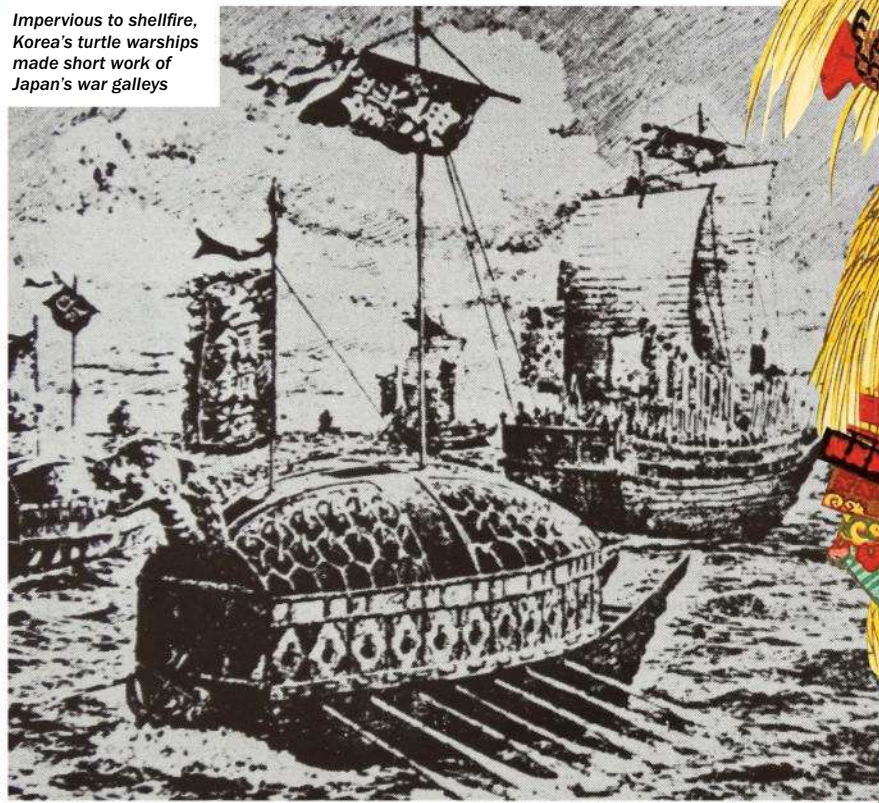
There were also the famous geobukseon, or turtle ships. Joseon shipyards mastered the construction of frigates carrying multiple cannon – a capability Japan's fleet lacked. The turtle ships of admiral Yi Sun-sin beat Japan's numerical advantage in war galleys carrying musketeers and swivel guns. By comparison, a single turtle ship (only a few were built) carried as many as 40 cannon and had a steel enclosure over its deck. Protruding rods around its hull kept other vessels from ramming it. Naval battles such as Hansando and Noryang, taking place six years apart, saw geobukseon nearly annihilate the Japanese.

The course of the Imjin War sometimes paralleled the inconclusive Korean War that took place 360 years later. This is seen in the importance of control over Pusan/Busan, the risk of Chinese intervention and the value of Hanyang/Seoul as capital and administrative centre. After Japan's invasion, the weakened Joseon kingdom faced an invasion threat from the ascendant Manchus, who almost overran the peninsula in the 1630s. It would be another three centuries before a Japanese army returned to Korea.

Left: Japan's invasion in 1592 began with an amphibious landing outside the coastal city of Pusan. It was perhaps the first well-documented exercise of the country's naval might

Right: An overlooked aspect of the Imjin War was the use of locally made firearms by the Japanese. Against these the Koreans had superior cannon

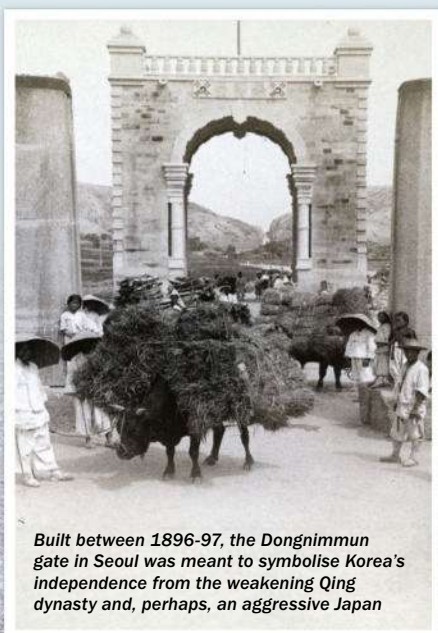
Impervious to shellfire, Korea's turtle warships made short work of Japan's war galleys



CONQUEST AND COLONISATION

Three centuries after its invasion of Korea a resurgent Japanese empire used blackmail and gunboat diplomacy to subdue its neighbour





Built between 1896-97, the Dongnimmun gate in Seoul was meant to symbolise Korea's independence from the weakening Qing dynasty and, perhaps, an aggressive Japan

Japan and Korea went to war several times over the centuries, but it was during a single period where the former emerged triumphant. Its origin was the ebb of the Joseon dynasty in the 1860s. At that point the longstanding patron-client relationship with the Qing dynasty ruling China was on shaky ground; a civil war had wrecked the empire and its economy was ailing after decades of unfair trade with European powers.

Skirmishes with the Americans and Russians, both of whom were eager to 'open up' Korea for their merchandise and technology, did the Joseon court no favours. By 1876 the youthful King Gojong made the sensible decision to accommodate the Japanese with the Ganghwa Treaty, which allowed investments from Tokyo. At the time it was explicitly forbidden to station any Japanese forces inside Korea. Still, Tokyo was patient and its upheavals in the 1870s as the Meiji-era kick-started industrialisation and political reform meant there was a brief respite for Korea.

Barely 20 years later the Empire of Japan locked horns with the Qing dynasty in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95). Both countries, having maintained tenuous peace for centuries, were adamant in their belief they could rise as Asian powers equal to the West. But Japan had done a splendid job in building its army and navy. Historical knowledge and strategic calculation demanded the Korean peninsula be seized as the fastest way to reach China's vulnerable northern provinces. This justified the army's landing on the peninsula's western coast to reach the capital Hanyang (modern-day Seoul) and then dash to the Yalu River. It was 302 years since the last samurai had set foot in Korea and now a modern Japanese invasion force returned.

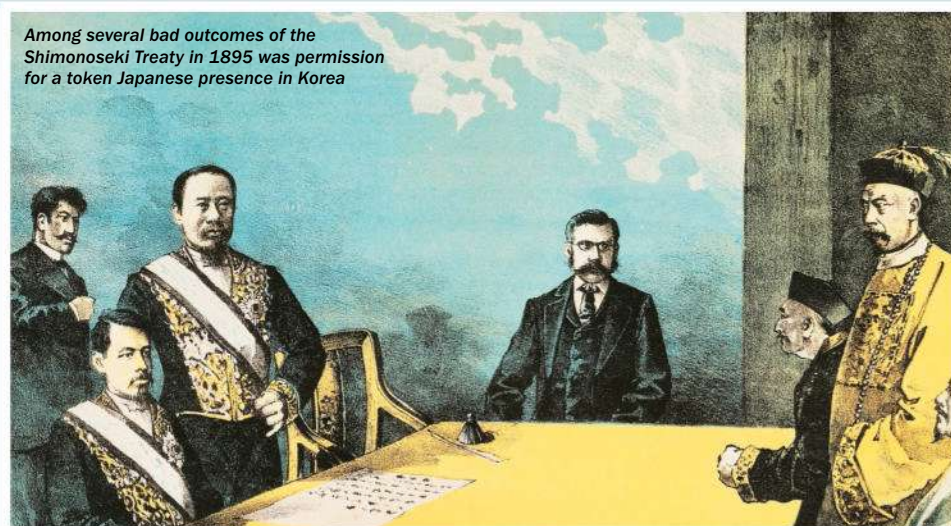
In an awful repeat of past mistakes King Gojong and his court were caught unprepared by the Japanese, whose goal was the same as during the 16th century – reaching Manchuria to defeat China. Neither could thousands of Qing soldiers stationed in Korea

repulse the onslaught. It was the same with the Qing's decrepit half-modernised navy and its useless cannon made in Chinese forges. The Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 was a humiliation for China and gave Japan partial control of the Yellow Sea – later undone by Russian threats – and paved the way for an unopposed campaign to annex Formosa (modern-day Taiwan). New arrangements were made with King Gojong's court and it helped that the shock of China's defeat rallied a pro-Japanese movement among the Korean elite. But the king paid dearly for his subservience to Tokyo. His wife was murdered in 1895 by sword-wielding assassins, and to stem any potential Japanese-led coup d'état in 1897 Korea was declared an 'empire' with himself an absolute ruler (an army mutiny in 1884 had almost toppled the monarchy). It was all for show, a desperate bid for legitimacy when the Japanese had established a garrison in Pusan and planned to monopolise a railway that ran the length of the peninsula.

The die was cast for the Joseon dynasty after the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) saw Tokyo victorious and in command of Port Arthur, which allowed control over the western half of the Yellow Sea. The presence of a massive Japanese army and the civilians who followed in its wake upended Korea. By 1905 a helpless King Gojong agreed to another dubious treaty. It was a death sentence of sorts, albeit with a commuted outcome. Regardless of his official title the royal court was now powerless and in 1907 his son ascended the throne but ruled in name only until Tokyo annexed Korea in 1910. To extinguish the Joseon bloodline the princes of the court were forced to marry Japanese princesses. The loss of independence meant Korean society was uprooted and impoverished. While resistance spread in many provinces Japan's army and police dealt with these using scorched earth tactics.

By the 1910s Japan abolished Korea's 500-year royal lineage, the country's armed forces, government and the mass media. The elderly King Gojong, maintained in a palace of marginal significance, passed away at age 66 in January 1919. It was speculated that, in all likelihood, the Japanese regime arranged his death.

Left: The Qing dynasty put up a feeble defence of Pyongyang in 1894. The city's fall meant the Japanese military had a clear land route to Manchuria



Among several bad outcomes of the Shimonoseki Treaty in 1895 was permission for a token Japanese presence in Korea

LEADERS & COMMANDERS

These figures each played a pivotal role in the centuries of conflict and colonialism that plagued Korea and Japan

TOYOTOMI HIDEYOSHI

A war veteran and a ruthless administrator, hubris led to his disastrous invasion of the Korean peninsula

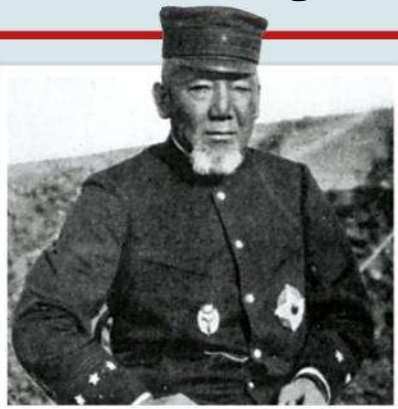
1537-98 JAPAN

Undeterred by his family's low social status, Hideyoshi became a formidable leader in the sengoku era's waning years. By the 1580s the imperial court in Kyoto recognised his talents, first with the honorific 'Toyotomi' and then the formal rank of taiko, and this gave Hideyoshi enough prestige and clout to act as Japan's national leader.

Invading Joseon in 1592 was part of a Japanese foreign policy designed by Hideyoshi that sought to reorganise maritime trade routes (benefiting Japan) and build an empire. What he did not count on, no matter if the Joseon capital was razed and pillaged, was the national resistance his samurai legions faced. Unlike Japan, with a strict hierarchy dividing commoners and samurai, the Joseon state had a loyal population and an economic system that pivoted to sustaining a long war. It was not surprising that combat dragged on for years, with the eventual reinforcements sent over by China's Ming dynasty overwhelming the Japanese.

Hideyoshi passed away in 1598 after he ordered another badly planned assault on Joseon. Aside from his foreign policy missteps he was an effective ruler who organised land rights, taxation and the civil service, and laid the groundwork for a modern Japanese military.

Hideyoshi is recognised among the three warlords who helped unify Japan after its long civil war-era. He ruled in the period between Oda Nobunaga and the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu



Historical experience and feeble local resistance allowed Oyama to direct the movements of Japanese forces within Korea during the war against Russia from 1904-05

GENERAL OYAMA IWAO

A samurai whose life and career bridged the Tokugawa shogunate and the industrialised Empire of Japan, General Oyama was responsible for reorganising Japan's army

1842 - 1916 JAPAN

With the bloodlines of two powerful clans - the Oyama and the Shimazu of Kagoshima - intermingling within his family, Oyama Iwao belonged to the rarest samurai generation: those who upheld the imperial throne during the rebellions of the 1860s and 1870s. As a junior officer he was also fortunate to have studied in Europe and receive a 'modern' education from French instructors. This resulted in the deep influence of French drill and tactics across the Japanese ground forces and was evident during battles against the Qing, or Manchu, troops during the 1890s.

History books ignore General Oyama's importance to Japan's empire-building but his role in organising a campaign in the Korean peninsula during the mid-1890s heralded the return of Japanese forces there three centuries after their defeat by the Joseon kingdom and its powerful navy. Unlike in the 1590s the combination of Japanese diplomacy and veiled threats allowed the army to gain a foothold in Korea, albeit a small one, that only grew over time. Oyama served with distinction during the Russo-Japanese War that finally brought Manchuria under Tokyo's control. Celebrated at home and in the imperial court, he passed away from old age with a chest full of medals.

ITO HIROBUMI

Polished and urbane, Japan's first prime minister was the deft hand guiding his country's colonial empire from the 1890s onward

1841 - 1909 JAPAN, KOREA

A man of startling contrasts, Ito's political career saw Japan's awkward transition from a shogunate to a constitutional monarchy that legitimised an empire. By 1885 he attained the rank of prime minister and within a decade Japan's influence over the Korean peninsula and the vulnerable Joseon royal court grew to a frightening degree. Another contrast in Ito's biography: he dedicated his life to a modern Japanese state while ensuring a modern Korean state, independent and powerful, would never arise.

By the 1900s he was assigned the title 'regent-general' over Korea. It was an influential position whose true authority was elusive. Controversy surrounded his public image and turn-of-the-century Korean nationalists saw him as the Japanese overlord who ruined King Gojong's family and pushed the feeble Joseon monarch to accept unjust treaties. Once Japan secured its interests in Korea by 1905, with the local economy now plundered by Japanese expatriates and Korean institutions demolished, Ito had a target painted on his back. The Japanese military's repression of rural uprisings was the final straw. During a visit to Manchuria in 1909 an assassin named Ahn Jung-geun shot him at close range with a revolver.

There was never a more central figure in Japan's renewed conquest of Korea than Ito, whose machinations led to the Joseon dynasty's end



SYNGMAN RHEE

A political exile and activist through much of his life, Rhee became South Korea's first national leader, and a staunch ally of the United States

1875 – 1965 JOSEON-ERA, SOUTH KOREA

No other prominent Korean in the 20th century lived through as many dangerous events as Syngman Rhee. Barely in his 20s and radicalised by the First Sino-Japanese War, whose outcome saw the royal family become de facto hostages of the Japanese, he joined a nationalist underground movement and ended up serving time in jail.

Rhee spent the majority of his adulthood as a political organiser and wandering exile. A Christian convert despite being descended from Joseon-era nobility, Rhee's travels in the United States endeared Americans to him and, as later events unfolded, the feeling was mutual. It helped that Rhee, no matter his difficult circumstances, received an impeccable Ivy League education.

The defeat and surrender of Japan in 1945 paved the way for full Korean independence under a 'trusteeship' arranged by the Soviet Union and the United States. Rhee, along with his nationalist government-in-exile, was handpicked to lead an upcoming Korean republic once the remaining great powers of the late 1940s resolved how the peninsula would be governed. The terrible war years from 1950-53 left Rhee undaunted and he clung to office until his ebbing popularity forced his resignation.



Rhee was a US-educated scholar and hardcore Korean patriot who lived to the age of 90

KING GOJONG

The last true Korean monarch of the 500-year-old Joseon dynasty endured the unbearable as his kingdom was erased

1852 – 1919 KOREA

Raised in the splendour of an unbroken royal lineage and its privileges, King Gojong's life was nevertheless filled with despair and uncertainty. Once on the throne at age 12, it was apparent Korea had fallen behind its neighbours. By the 1870s his main preoccupation was trying to establish a healthy diplomatic relationship with aggressive Western powers and Japan's new imperial government, all of whom wanted unjust treaties with the royal court.

The last true Korean monarch suffered at the hands of Japan's creeping occupation, which began to hijack the national government he was supposed to control as early as 1895 – the same year his wife Queen Myeongseong was murdered by three assassins. Civil unrest and economic crises quickened the gradual decline of the Joseon court and

the Korean state it ruled. The 1900s saw Gojong's own influence dwindle into nothing despite becoming a titular 'emperor' in 1897 while signing away Korea's independence upon the insistence of Tokyo.

Having been reduced to a puppet of the Japanese, Gojong lost his crown in 1907 and passed away in January 1919. The resulting public anguish inspired the civil resistance movement on 1 March.



Right: Perhaps the saddest episode in King Gojong's life was seeing his grandson Prince Yi Ku shipped off to Japan for an arranged marriage

UGAKI KAZUSHIGE

The Japanese statesman's posting as a colonial administrator over Korea remains controversial to this day

1868 – 1956 JAPAN

There were few indications of Ugaki's sinister role as a governor general of Korea before the Second World War. His beginnings were not marked by any distinction other than a lifetime of government service.

It could be, as an army officer himself, his enthusiastic support for Japan's hardline puschists in the 1930s showed the true nature of the man. He believed in imperium and was willing to serve its cruel ends.

By the time Ugaki became Tokyo's highest-ranking official in Korea the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45) was imminent and the peninsula was being subjected to permanent martial law. This meant some of the harshest measures ever imposed by Japan on a captive population: the erasure of native language, writing and even job titles. The local gendarmes in Korea, for example, were little more than extensions of Japan's own national police force and had little regard for due process. Korean society as a whole was reorganised to bolster Japan's wartime needs. Factories managed by zaibatsus (cartels) absorbed thousands of workers. Young men were conscripted into the army and trained as Japanese soldiers. Any attempt at subterfuge and resistance was met by extreme reprisal.

All this happened under Ugaki's watch but he survived the war and spent another decade in Japanese politics.



Ugaki Kazushige was no different from his predecessors, a career soldier with a mandate to govern a captive nation

KIM IL-SUNG

A rebel fugitive who became a strongman in the mold of Joseph Stalin, the elder Kim dominated North Korea for half a century

1912-94 NORTH KOREA

Few Korean leaders embodied the militant nationalism of the colonial era and its odd turns better than Kim Il-sung. A 'righteous army' veteran by his 20s, Kim exhibited a talent for survival long before he was thrust onto the global stage. Unfortunately, his trials by fire in the 1930s and 1940s as an exiled rebel and Soviet agent have long been obfuscated by his personality cult.

It is an understandable gap as mainstream histories rarely delve into the lives of the many Korean patriots who found gainful employment in the Soviet armed forces.

Kim was unique, however, for attaining leadership positions within both the Soviet military and the Korean resistance.

Once the peninsula was partitioned along the 38th parallel Kim emerged, no doubt under the direction of Stalin's secret service, as the unchallenged head of a communist party with his capital in historic Pyongyang. Having withstood the destruction of North Korea by US and allied air power from 1950 until the Panmunjom ceasefire in 1953, an

unrepentant Kim preserved the world's last Stalinist regime until the 1990s.

The dynastic grip over North Korea continued with his son, Kim Jong-il, and his grandson, Kim Jong-un.

Part of the late Marshal Kim's legacy is North Korea's perpetual despotism and thriving nuclear weapons programme



GUERRILLAS & DICTATORS

With Japan finally annexing Korea in 1910, widespread resistance followed, sowing the seeds of future conflict

The end of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) hastened the Joseon state's demise. Tokyo's victorious imperialists in parliament and the armed forces had long-term plans for ruling the Korean peninsula and a huge swathe of northern China. The vulnerable King Gojong, without an army to command and influenced by pro-Japanese courtiers, was driven into seclusion and his heir was little more than a puppet watched over by Japanese generals. The intellectuals

who had tried modernising the country in the 1890s were replaced by an influx of Japanese managers in every field, from banking to bureaucracy. Post-war economic hardship and the complete erasure of Korea's independence triggered revolts across the peninsula, and these were put down by Japanese troops. The eubyong, or 'righteous armies', that sprouted outside cities were neither well organised nor supported by a foreign power, although the grumbling from Tokyo insisted the Russians were behind the trouble.

The anti-Japanese resistance began with the guerrillas in provinces where farming was the predominant way of life. During previous years the breakdown of land rights and stress on labour markets (thousands of Japanese porters had relocated to Korea) impoverished rural communities. To dampen the unrest the Imperial Japanese Army burned whole villages and rounded up suspects; local jails swelled with prisoners. Japan's heavy-handed response to Korean rebellion was not unprecedented. The occupation of Taiwan in the 1890s was

Dividing the Korean peninsula along the 38th parallel in the 1940s seemed a practical step for US and Soviet forces once Japan was out of the picture. But it only presaged a new era of conflict





the original proving ground for Tokyo's colonial efforts. Displacing a population was not outrageous either for the standards of the time; Japan acted like a colonial power much like the European empires who had long histories of subjugating foreign lands.

The full details of Korean resistance in the 1910s are now lost but its exiled nationalists and their strenuous attempts to lobby for independence left a credible record of anti-colonial resistance. By the 1940s a government-in-exile was prepared to replace the Japanese when the peninsula gained its freedom. Before this moment the Korean struggle against Japan's dominion over their country went through multiple phases. Active guerrilla warfare in the peninsula lasted from the late 1890s till the late 1900s. By the 1910s civil disobedience took root as the means for armed revolt disappeared. The creation of a provisional government by Korean exiles in China saw the independence movement lean on media campaigns and lobbying for the duration of the 1920s.

It was in the 1930s when armed resistance against Japan evolved and took on an ideological cast. Korean nationalists were united in their fervour but, with Tokyo's deepening control of Manchuria, the rebels found allies in China's own embattled communists and the Soviet Union. The irony of this was Manchuria had a substantial ethnic Korean population who enjoyed Japan's patronage because their farm holdings

Above: For decades Japan's brazen imperialism was overlooked as it posed no threat to the established Western powers. As a result, Korea became a smaller piece of a grander colonial territory

Below: The South Manchuria Railway was a vital infrastructure project that Japan maintained for decades to sustain its northeast Asian empire. Without its stations in Korea, logistics and economic activity would have been impossible to organise



and property were secure under colonial government. Opposite these submissive locals were the tough and well-equipped socialist guerrillas who later helped occupy the northern half of the peninsula after 1945 with the Soviet Union's full support. Among them was the hardened scout and officer named Song-ju who became the future leader of North Korea, Kim Il-sung. Aside from Soviet proxies there existed another strain of Korean fighters born and raised under Japan's dominion who then served in the Imperial Japanese Army.

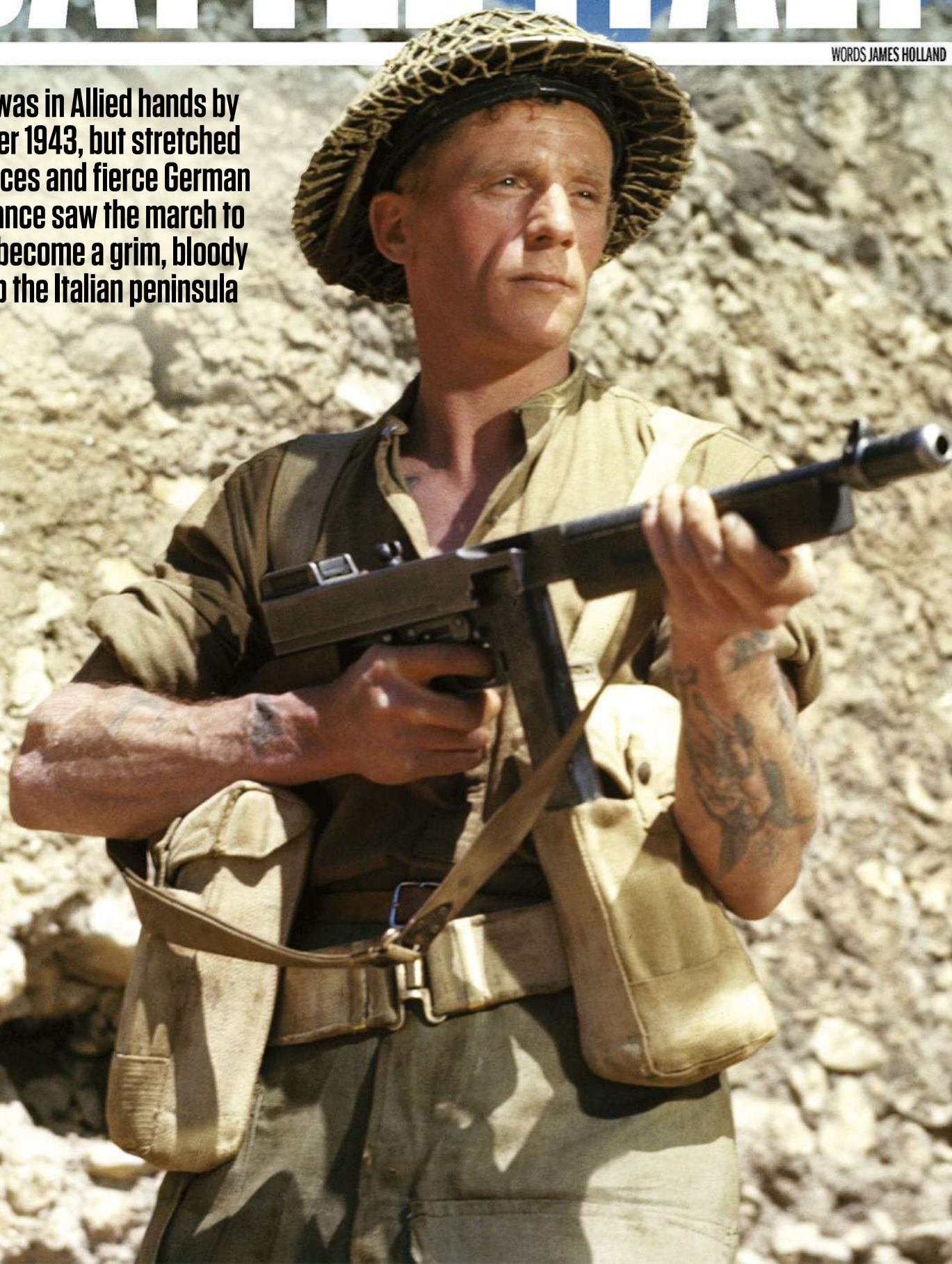
A perplexing example of Korean nationalism's uneven path in the 20th century is Park Chung-hee's life and career. Born in 1917 when Japan dominated every aspect of Korean society, the future South Korean putschist and strongman had a Japanese education, was given a Japanese name and served in the Kwantung Army – a garrison force in Japan's Manchukuo colonial state. In a bizarre twist it was rumoured he collaborated with Korea's communist underground after the Second World War. This episode had little effect on his later career in the Republic of Korea Armed Forces. Like the imperialist hardliners in Japan's military three decades prior, in 1961 he took over South Korea's government and ruled with an iron fist. Since it was the Cold War the United States tolerated him but this was impossible for his secret police chief, who shot him dead after a contentious meeting over labour protests in 1979.

1943

BATTLE FOR ITALY

WORDS JAMES HOLLAND

Sicily was in Allied hands by summer 1943, but stretched resources and fierce German resistance saw the march to Rome become a grim, bloody slog up the Italian peninsula



On 20 December 1943, the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, known more informally as the 'Hasty Ps', were part of yet another attack on the Adriatic Coast aiming to try and break through to the small coastal town of Ortona – part of the German Bernhardt Line defensive position across the leg of Italy. The Hasty Ps had been part of the first attack more than two weeks earlier and had been in action almost constantly since then, save four days out of the front line when even then they were still within range of enemy shellfire. When Eighth Army, to which the Canadian 1st Division was attached, had launched its assault across the River Sangro a little under a month earlier, it had been expected they would be in Pescara, 15 miles (24km) north of Ortona, within a matter of days. Brutal weather, mud, the terrain and dogged defence had crushed such ambitions.

The Hasty Ps attacked early that morning, the infantry advancing Passchendaele-style behind another massive artillery barrage, the reverberations of which seemed to be pounding as rhythmically as the increasingly heavily thumping heart of the battalion's intelligence officer, Lieutenant Farley Mowat. They were advancing in open country, Ortona away to their right, the landscape dotted with farm buildings but also drainage ditches. Later in the afternoon, Lieutenant Colonel Burt Kennedy, the Hasty Ps' commanding officer, sent Mowat to find a squadron of Shermans that was due to be supporting them. He was picking his way through the mud and between the drainage ditches and had just paused by a stone farm building when a salvo of Nebelwerfer mortars screamed in and landed 50 yards away. The blast knocked him off his feet and in through the doorway directly onto a prone figure that gave a loud gurgling belch. There was a sickening stench. Gathering his wits, Mowat realised he'd fallen onto a dead German paratrooper and then saw there were two more sprawled there in the mud and manure, and a fourth, still alive, sitting against the wall.

Mowat stared at the man, convinced he was about to be killed, but the German made no move at all.

"Vasser... haff you... vasser?" he asked.

Slowly Mowat got to his feet then realised the German's left hand was clutching the stump where his right had been. "Dark gore was still touting between his fingers and spreading in a black pool about his outthrust legs," wrote Mowat. "Most dreadful was a great gash in his side from which protruded a glistening dark mass which must have been his liver." He was young, pale-eyed. Plaintively, he

asked again for water, but Mowat didn't have any – he only had rum in his water bottle. He tried to tell him – "nein wasser, only rum" – but the boy looked at him so pleadingly that he handed it over. Holding the bottle to the young man's lips he watched him take spasmodic gulps then drank some himself. Not long after, the boy died. In a state of numb shock, Mowat left the building – and the dead men – found the missing Shermans and got a ride back to join Baker Company, who were now forming up for a renewed attack. Sliding off the tank into the mud, his legs collapsed and then so did the rest of him. For a brief while, Mowat was out cold.

Mowat's first taste of combat had been on Sicily, back in July, but five months on, and now just about the only junior officer in the Hasty Ps still standing, he had begun to suffer from combat fatigue. It was not surprising. However intense the fighting had been in Sicily, it was even more so in Italy, and made worse by the shortages, which ensured more was expected of the men than was normally the case, by the conditions – the rain, the mud, the wet and cold – and by the deflating knowledge that the campaign was not going as well as had been hoped. Back in the summer of 1943, the Allies had been on the charge, with victory after victory. Now, in the mountains, mud and misery of an Italian winter, those heady days appeared to have long gone.

The Sicilian offence

It was on 17 August 1943, the very same day that the victory was secured on Sicily, that the Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff gave the green light to a series of plans for the invasion of mainland Italy – plans that had repeatedly evolved ever since first mooted back in the later spring. In many ways, an Allied invasion of Italy made sense. They had vast armed forces in the Mediterranean that could be put to good use in the nine months until May 1944, when Operation Overlord, the cross-Channel invasion, was due to take place. Invading Italy, it was thought, might hurry the Axis partner out of the war. This could then prompt the Germans to either abandon the rest of the peninsula, as well as the Balkans, Greece and the Aegean, which at the time were largely garrisoned by Italian troops, or replace them with their own. Hitler would almost certainly take the latter course, and those troops would have to be drawn from the Eastern and Western Fronts, which would be good for Overlord and Soviet efforts in the east.

What made the Allies go for a more ambitious plan, however, was the prospect of capturing Foggia and the surrounding plain, one of the few flat areas of Italy and lying

Left: Corporal M Smith of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry brandishes his Thompson submachine gun, Sant'Angelo

Below: British Marines and Navy personnel pictured during amphibious assault training in Sicily, September 1943



around one-third of the way up the leg from the south on the Adriatic, eastern, side. There were already a number of airfields there and more could easily be created, from where heavy four-engine strategic bombers could operate to further tighten the noose around Germany. It would also bring the heavy bombers closer to the oil fields of Ploesti in Romania, Germany's only source of real – rather than synthetic – oil and would enable them to hammer the German aircraft factories in the southern Reich. Winning air superiority over a swathe of north-west Europe was a prerequisite for launching Overlord, and having the Foggia airfield complex would help the Allies achieve that. Finally, there was the prospect of capturing Rome. Of the four reasons for a major invasion, the capital was strategically the least important, but would be a significant and psychological victory nonetheless.

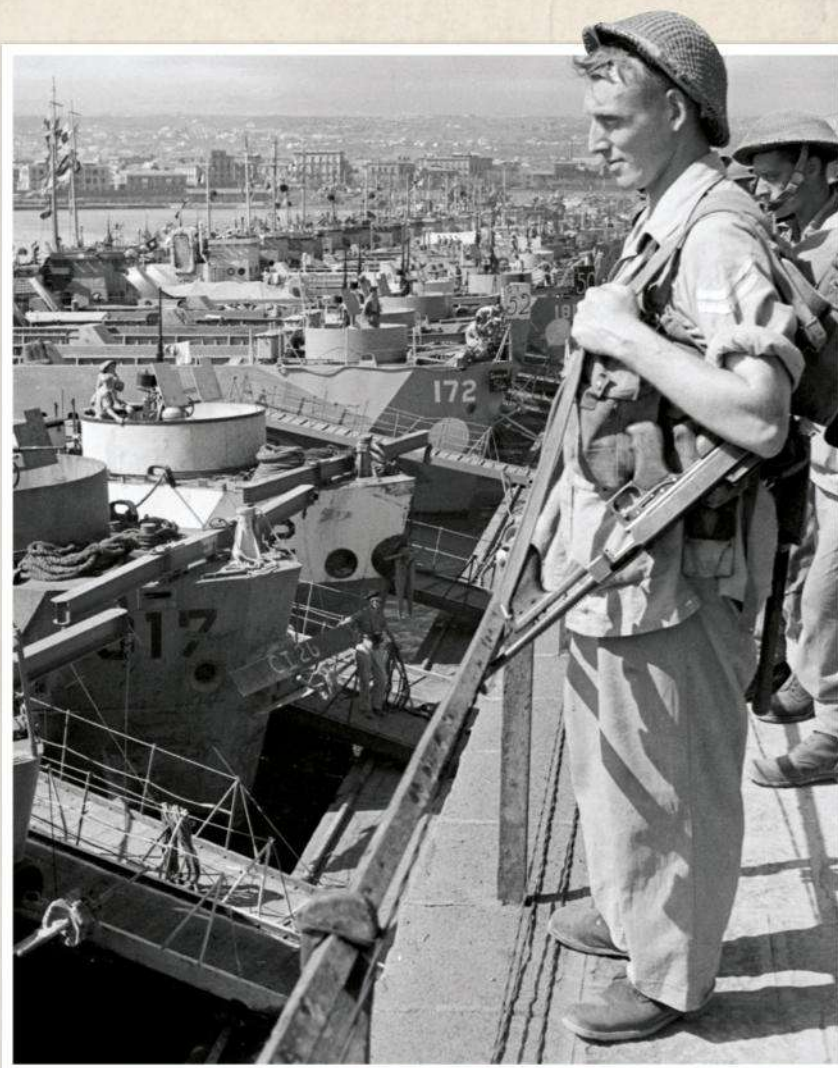
It was capturing Rome and especially the Foggia airfields that persuaded the Allies to increase the scale of plans for Italy and launch a major invasion. Signed off by the Combined Chiefs of Staff on 17 August was a bold, two-pronged plan. Initially, on 3 September, a small invasion force from Eighth Army would be sent across the narrow Straits of Messina into the toe of Italy. This would be followed six days later by the main invasion force using the US Fifth Army under Lieutenant General Mark Clark at Salerno, to the south of Naples, but still a significant stride up the leg of Italy.

This sounded reasonable on paper, but was actually soon to prove an incredibly high-risk proposition. Back in August 1942, the British had decided they would avoid retreating again at all costs and to use heavy firepower from artillery and the air and greater mechanisation to do much of the heavy lifting in battle. Undue risks were not to be taken, all of which was very sensible; after all, keeping casualties to a minimum and ensuring they never had to fight over the same ground more than once was eminently logical. This 'steel not flesh' approach was equally readily adopted by the Americans and ensured that when Operation Husky – the invasion of Sicily – was launched, as much risk as possible had been removed.

Now, though, in early September 1943, the cross-Channel invasion due for May 1944 had taken over as the primary mission in Europe while Allied commitments around the world had increased – in the Pacific, in South-East Asia, in help for the Chinese and for the Soviet Union. Much of the assault craft earmarked for Sicily had already left the theatre – sent to the Pacific and back to the UK. Some 8,719 landing craft had been built in the USA alone between May 1942 and April 1943, but this programme had since been halted in favour of other pressing shipping requirements. Yet, in the mechanised, firepower-heavy world in which the Allies now operated, a single infantry division required some 3,000 vehicles. And vehicles needed to be maintained, as did the fighting arm: with fuel, food, ammunition, replacements and weapons.

This was why no more than two divisions could be sent across the Straits of Messina on 3 September. Husky had been supported by 1,743 landing craft; General Bernard Montgomery had just 268. For Operation Avalanche, as the Salerno landings were codenamed, there would be just 359. This meant that although there were plenty of Allied troops in Sicily and North Africa, General Mark Clark's Fifth Army would be landing just two British divisions, one US and with a fourth waiting out at sea. It wasn't enough to guarantee success.

The Allies knew this but convinced themselves to take the gamble by making a number of assumptions which were based more on optimism than reality. The first was that the Germans would retreat to a line that ran from Pisa in the west to Rimini in the east and which was some 200 miles (322km) north of Rome. This was based on a decrypt of German radio traffic back in May that Hitler planned to take this course should the Allies invade mainland Italy. It was then confirmed by General Giuseppe Castellone, the prime Italian negotiator



"HITLER HAD BEEN OBSESSED WITH HIS SOUTHERN FLANK, NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF THE PRECIOUS OIL FIELDS IN ROMANIA"

for Italy's exit from the war once talks had begun on 17 August. Whether Castellone could be trusted or whether this was still Hitler's resolve was not at all clear, however.

Second, the Italians, now negotiating for an armistice, agreed to help the Allies by turning on the Germans. Whether this could be relied on was equally questionable. As it happened, Hitler did intend to pull back to the Pisa-Rimini line with his old favourite, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, in place to command Army Group B in the north of Italy. Divisions were being poured into the north, while in the southern half, the Luftwaffe's Field Marshal Albert Kesselring commanded Army Group C with eight divisions. Kesselring had even offered his resignation on 14 August, but Hitler had refused to accept it. The Führer had also insisted that careful preparations be put in place to disarm the entire Italian armed forces the moment their wavering ally sued for peace; his prime concern was taking over the huge swathe of the southern Mediterranean that was currently being held by the Italian troops. For a long time, Hitler had been obsessed with his southern flank, not least because of the precious oil fields in Romania.

By the time Eighth Army had made its foray across the Straits of Messina, Hitler had decided to present the Italians with a fait accompli: on 9 September he planned to tell the Italians they now had to defend the southern half of Italy while German forces would pull back to the Apennines and control all of the northern half of the country.

The Italian high command, meanwhile, was in a state of increasing panic. Italian civilians were not coping well with Allied bombing but the leadership was more afraid of German retribution than Allied bombs. General Giacomo Carboni, the head of SIM, the secret intelligence service,

as well as commanding the Motorised Armoured Corps based in and around Rome, had more resolve than most and suggested sending instructions in a coded message called 'OP44' to all military commanders to open fire on the Germans should they attack following the announcement of the armistice. This was agreed by his superiors, although not immediately acted upon as Carboni had been assured would be the case.

Rather, the Italian high command was increasingly in a lather about the timing of the armistice with the Allied invasion, because although the armistice was finally signed on the afternoon of 3 September, the announcement and timing of Avalanche was kept secret by the Allies and would not be shared with the Italians until the last moment. Wishful thinking gripped the Italians too, who were praying for an Allied force far larger than could ever be reality and for an invasion much later in September, and certainly not sooner than the 12th.

This was because the Germans were dominating both supplies of fuel and ammunition in Italy and also the main transportation network. The Italians convinced themselves that they needed the extra time to get ready and that only with a vast Allied invasion force could they escape the wrath of their former ally. So when on 8 September they were told the announcement would be that evening and Avalanche launched in the early hours of the following morning, they were gripped with panic. Rather than issue Carboni's OP44 instruction as agreed, General Ambrosio, the head of the Comando Supremo, the Italian high command, and Marshal Pietro Badoglio, the prime minister, issued specific instructions instead not to open fire on German troops. Carboni, the spy master, had been duped by his own side.

Avalanche arrives

The invasion fleet for Avalanche arrived late on the night of 8 September. At around ten minutes to midnight, General Clark went out onto the bridge of the USS Ancon, Admiral Kent Hewitt's command ship, and was struck by a sense of helplessness; there was nothing more he could do but

Left: Troops from The Northamptonshire Regiment wait to board landing craft at Catania, Sicily, for the invasion of Italy, 2 September 1943

Left, bottom: British troops in Campania, Italy, conduct an operation to install telephone lines, November 1943

Below: Allied soldiers in Reggio on 3 September 1943 pass a wall daubed with support for Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, who had been overthrown and imprisoned in July



hope all would be well. He'd last commanded troops in battle as a junior officer on the Western Front in the last war and although he'd proved himself a superb planner and administrator, he'd not been tested in combat for 25 years. Now he was leading an Allied army for the first time and with an incredibly poor hand. A lot was being asked of him and his men, yet at around 2.15am on the morning of Thursday 9 September 1943, the first landing craft were lowered onto the sea and began forming up for the invasion. The die had been cast.

Perhaps predictably, the Italians crumbled despite making a spirited defence of Rome with the help of a popular insurrection. In a matter of days, the Italian Armed Forces simply ceased to exist as German troops swept over the barracks, ports and airfields in northern Italy and into the Balkans and through the Aegean. Those who resisted – such as on Cefalonia – were treated brutally. At any rate, the Italians were no help to the Allies. Nor was Eighth Army able to support Clark's Fifth Army. Italy was extremely mountainous, especially in the toe of the boot, with lots of rivers, and many narrow and winding roads designed to support mules and carts and occasional vehicles but not the vast and heavy horde of the modern Allied armies. The engineers of the retreating 29 Panzer-Grenadier Division made light work of the mountain roads, culverts and bridges, slowing the advance of the British 5th Division to a crawl.

However, Kesselring did make a catastrophic mistake, albeit one with Hitler's backing and based on the plans to pull back to the north of Rome. Although Rommel had 11 divisions in Army Group B in the north, none of these would be heading south any time soon. Kesselring had eight in the south, including around the capital, but with the Allied landings at Salerno, defeating this Allied incursion became his priority and as soon as it was clear *Avalanche* was the main assault, he directed the bulk of his forces to converge here. 29th Panzer-Grenadier was ordered to disengage from the Eighth Army and head to Salerno and once Rome was secured, 2 Fallschirmjäger was left there to hold the fort, while the rest were also hurriedly ordered south. Holding Apulia, the entire south-east of Italy, including

“THE GERMANS HAD DISCOVERED THAT EVEN IN LATE SUMMER GOING ON THE OFFENSIVE IN THE MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN OF ITALY WAS IMMENSELY CHALLENGING”

the ports of Taranto, Bari and Brindisi and the Foggia airfields was the 1 Fallschirmjäger Division, considered to be the best in the Tenth Army. At Hitler's insistence, however, Kesselring ordered a number of these paratrooper units to join divisions heading to Salerno to stiffen their backbone a little. Needless to say, this left the Apulia region only weakly held, so they were ordered to fall back and not contest the south-east at all, save for the usual demolitions and rearguards.

This enabled Eighth Army to land the 1st Airborne Division at Taranto on the same day as *Avalanche*, as ships could pull directly into the harbour. Further divisions were landed in the following days and Eighth Army began moving northwards, taking Bari and Brindisi and heading ever closer to Foggia.

Yet while that was good news for the Allies, by the third day at Salerno Clark's forces were facing the prospect of a counter-attack by six divisions and elements of a seventh. This came the following day, although by determined defence, exhausting all manpower reserves and with the support of an all-out air effort and the hurrying of warships to the bay, the Germans were held. Early on 17 September, Kesselring ordered a general retreat behind the Volturno, which ran across the western leg some 20 miles (32km) north of Naples. Clark, who has been so often vilified by historians, deserves huge credit for the victory at Salerno; aided by the air and naval support, his forces performed heroically and saw off what could have been a catastrophic defeat.

Foggia was captured on 27 September and Naples four days later, but Hitler, encouraged by Kesselring's stand at Salerno rather than seeing it for the defeat it was,

Right: German paratroopers guard the Italian Ministry of Internal Affairs in Rome, September 1943

Below: British infantry soldiers march past a road block in the Italian port of Salerno, September 1943





now instructed Tenth Army to continue fighting south of Rome. In the weeks that followed, Rommel was sidelined then posted to Normandy and Kesselring became the supremo in Italy, determined to hold the Allies for as long as possible. Strategically and operationally, however, this made no sense because the Germans had already abandoned vital ports in the south but most crucially, the Foggia airfield complex, the only area of ground really worth fighting for. Shortening supply lines and creating a bastion line of defence further north, as Hitler had originally planned, was a far more sensible option for a warring nation already stretched to breaking point.

By the beginning of October it had started to rain and would continue to do so for more than 50 percent of the days remaining in the year. Much of the Allies' materiel wealth and superior air power was neutered, leaving the Poor Bloody Infantry to do the hard yards. Eighth Army pushed up through the centre and Adriatic Coast and Fifth Army crossed the Volturno, but then both armies came up against the Bernhardt – or Winter – Line, a major defensive position that made the most of the mountains, rivers and defences that hugely favoured the defender and which ran from the west coast to east.

At Salerno the Germans had discovered that even in late summer going on the offensive in the mountainous terrain of Italy was immensely challenging. Now, with the days shortening and the near-constant rain, mud and cold, and with air power severely hampered by the weather too, both Fifth and Eighth Armies were doing pretty well to make any progress at all.

It was, however, coming at a terrible price for all concerned and not least the Italians caught in the cross-fire. The Allies were supposed to hold the moral high ground and liberate the Italians from the Nazi yoke but the reliance on firepower meant entire villages and towns in

the way were being destroyed, while life for the Italians was made worse by the scorched-earth policy adopted by the Germans as they fell back to the Winter Line. A humanitarian disaster quickly developed. Starvation and disease became rife.

Meanwhile, frontline infantry units in particular were suffering horrifically. Neither the Germans nor the Allies were trained in mountain fighting, yet that was what they were doing, while battling against swollen rivers, bridging that was swept away and quagmires of mud. There was a reason why warfare of old had been fought in the summer months, but the Allies were in a hurry. What's more, they could not fall back on the defensive because the buffer between the frontline and Foggia was not enough to safeguard the investment there. And it was an investment that was growing because on 1 November the Fifteenth Air Force was activated and it was agreed that instead of bringing six bomb groups to Italy, this should increase to 21 by March 1944. Again, because of the shortage of shipping, this build-up came at a cost to the ground forces. The Battle of Ortona was just one of a series of truly awful battles to try and crack the Winter Line. Incredibly, by the end of 1943, the Allies did achieve this breakthrough both sides of the peninsular but Rome was still out of reach and they now faced the next major defensive position prepared by the Germans: the Gustav Line.

This, then, was the context in which the Cassino battles that followed into the first five months of 1944 should be seen. A black cloud has been held over the Italian campaign ever since, but it should be recognised that the main Allied aims were achieved in swift order; that it descended into such a terrible, grinding mire was largely down to lack of sufficient support by the Allied Combined Chiefs and shifting priorities rather than the army commanders – and troops – on the ground.

THE SAVAGE STORM THE BATTLE FOR ITALY 1943



JAMES
HOLLAND'S
LATEST BOOK IS
AVAILABLE NOW
FROM
BANTAM PRESS

AGENT A12

BRITAIN'S MAN IN BERLIN

WORDS JASON BELL

Bell was a keen outdoorsman with a passion for the Canadian wilderness

Read how a dashing intellectual from Nova Scotia became a spy who warned the world of Nazi Germany's plans for a race war

Of the many important figures that had the bravery and conviction to stand up against Nazi Germany, one has remained unnoticed in war history until now. Recently declassified papers reveal that British intelligence's secret agent, Dr Winthrop Bell, provided the first warnings about the Nazis, and thwarted their earliest battle plans.

As an undercover operative in Germany, Bell, codenamed A12, gave the first warnings of the nascent Nazi ideology in early 1919. Months before Adolf Hitler was a player in the movement, Bell warned of Nazi plans for race war. In 1919, he described how the extremists planned to target Jews and team up with Russia and Japan to fight a war of revenge. His report was an eerily prescient warning of the birth of the Axis.

Two decades later, in spring 1939, Bell wrote the first intel alert of Hitler's plans for the Holocaust, and later that year published it in a leading Canadian newspaper. It was the first warning of the horrors to come.

Bell wanted to warn the West to eradicate the Nazis before they became powerful, but the plot he described seemed, to some, too incredible to be true. Still, his warnings were sufficient to

raise the alarm among far-sighted people, like the chiefs of MI6. Britain was sufficiently worried about the Nazis to rearm and counter them.

Thinker, student, spy

Nearly 6ft (1.8m) tall, Bell was a handsome, blond, blue-eyed philosopher, outdoorsman, engineer and businessman. Before beginning his espionage career, he was a railway surveyor in the inhospitable northern Canadian forests and served on Emmanuel College's rowing team at Cambridge University.

But he wasn't just muscles and rugged backstory. A New Brunswick newspaper described his "amazing capacity for hard work" and "studious, friendly, gracious, attractive" personality.

Bell was born in 1884 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and raised in a prosperous, academically inclined family. His father, the owner of a successful ship-outfitting business, was a genial, humble man who gladly stood against injustice. Bell's mother, a perfectionist unto exhaustion, studied music in Boston before teaching piano in Sackville.

After graduating with honours from the prestigious Mount Allison University in Sackville in 1908, Bell went to Harvard to

study philosophy. He was planning to become a philosophy professor at Harvard when he arrived at Göttingen, Germany, in 1911, to become the first Anglophone doctoral student of the famous German philosopher Edmund Husserl, who was greatly impressed with the young man. Bell was making his final dissertation revisions when Britain entered the Great War in August 1914. As a British subject, he was arrested and his doctorate was withdrawn.

Then things became much worse. Based on a misheard conversation, he fell under suspicion as a spy and was subjected to harsh interrogations. He was eventually judged innocent and ended up, like the other British civilian prisoners, in Ruhleben prison camp, a former horse-racing track, where the men were housed in stables, six to a horse stall.

Spook school

Despite armed guards, barbed wire, mud and the crowded, noisy conditions, the camp had its upsides. The prisoners were allowed to organise themselves and use their own funds to import goods needed for camp shops, organised sports, cultural activities and even a university. Because the prisoners included academics, musicians and athletes caught

in Germany at the outbreak of war, they created a thriving leisure scene with musical performances, drama, film and competitive sports. Bell taught philosophy and history at Ruhleben Camp School. Distinguished institutions such as Oxford, Edinburgh and the University of London later recognised Ruhleben credits.

For a future Second World War anti-Nazi intelligence agent, Ruhleben was like a four-year espionage preparatory course, paid for by the German government. It gave Bell the opportunity to hone his German language skills and understand the nuances of the German mindset and political situation at a level of detail that would have been impossible from outside the country. Being near Berlin also meant staying near friends with sensitive positions in German military intelligence. Notably, Bell was not the only Ruhleben inmate to end up with the secret service; his prison team hockey rival was John Cecil Masterman, who orchestrated the Double Cross operation that used double agents to convince Hitler that the D-Day invasion would happen at Pas-de-Calais rather than Normandy.

At the First World War's end, Bell spent weeks in Berlin, having conversations with his key sources. He learned that despite political turmoil and Germany's starvation, the people were extremely hopeful about their democratic future. But dangerous forces lurked in the background, including powerful racist warlords like General Erich Ludendorff.

Soon Bell was in London, where he met with the Canadian Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden, a family friend. Bell explained the German situation, and told him a surprising fact: a leading German faction had fought the Great War as a race war. That faction was now marginalised, and the pro-democratic majority was in charge.

But democracy was on an unstable footing. Bell warned they could not remain in power for long if conditions remained desperate. Militant Bolsheviks and racist nationalists waited in the wings. Bell proposed a plan to secure friendly relations between Germany and the Allies to save democracy and starve the extremists of recruits.

"BELL'S FIRST-HAND DESCRIPTION OF STARVING CHILDREN AND DESPERATE MOTHERS HELPED TURN THE TIDE OF PUBLIC OPINION"

Borden made introductions, and MI6 soon wanted to hire Bell as an agent. But, owing to post-war austerity, the secret service was virtually broke. The legendary C, MI6's chief and founder Sir Mansfield Smith-Cumming, needed to lay off many of his best agents who had risked their lives in the service. Fortunately, a solution was found. Canada, with its immense national resources, would cover Bell's salary, providing a handsome income that would let him wine and dine Germany's most important citizens in style.

The Canadian became Britain's newest secret agent. He was assigned cover as a Reuters reporter and sent to Berlin, a once orderly city now turned into a deadly web of intrigue. Communists, nationalists and democrats vied for the country's soul.

Reporting from Weimar

Not one to do things by half-measures, Bell took his cover job as journalist seriously. His dispatches went to both MI6 and to English-language newspapers throughout the world. His risky trips to the telegraph office, sometimes sprinting through raging urban battles, gave readers a live-time description of Germany's descent into madness.

Some journalists, he complained, stayed safe in their luxurious hotels, writing stories based on propagandistic news releases. But Bell knew he needed to take the risk of getting shot to deliver the unvarnished truth about German desperation. He wouldn't be able to convince Britain's political leaders to act unless their voting public was swayed. And it was still popular to be anti-German, owing to resentment about the war.

Bell's reports, informed by sources like the future Nobel Prize-winning physicist Albert Einstein, were key to finally ending the Allied food blockade of Germany that continued into 1919. A misconception holds that the war stopped with the November 1918 Armistice. It was only a ceasefire. The violence continued, but with slow starvation rather than artillery fire. The blockade remained in place until March 1919, when Bell's first-hand description of starving children and desperate mothers helped turn the tide of public opinion.

He urged that extending a helping hand to German democracy was better than letting the country fall under the control of the extremists. Desperate economic conditions made for easy recruiting by extremist militias. Along with Borden and C, Bell had a growing number of allies in the quest, including the powerful British spymaster Lord Maurice Hankey, influential figures at Versailles like Lord Robert Cecil, and directors of prominent financial institutions including the Bank of England, Lloyds and Barclays.

Bell also swayed the British Prime Minister David Lloyd George through personal briefings. After meeting Bell on 26 March, the prime minister was converted to a more merciful plan for the Treaty of Versailles. Unfortunately, the American President Woodrow Wilson had a change of heart in the opposite direction, towards France's proposal for harsh terms.

Still, the British negotiators mitigated the punishment. For instance, after being briefed by Bell, Lloyd George shocked France and the United States by saying that if Germany refused to sign the draft treaty without changes, and the Allies invaded, Britain wouldn't join them.

Bell's intel had certainly given Lloyd George a considerable fright. Not amending the draft treaty would mean war. If German Silesia, among the country's richest land, was handed over to Poland, as the draft treaty planned, war would begin immediately.

But there was an easy way to keep the peace: Bell urged letting Silesians vote on which country they wanted to join, Germany or Poland. Who could argue against democracy? France finally relented and the vote was

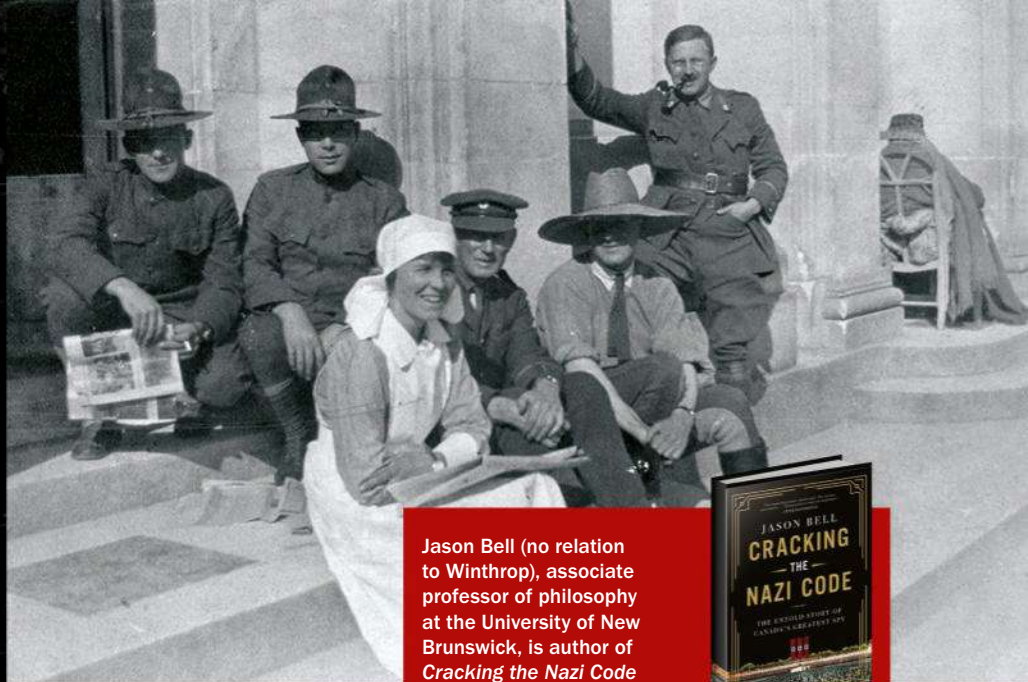
Bell, pictured here on the front row with his Cambridge rowing team mates, was an athlete as well as an intellectual





Above: The Ruhleben prison camp theatre. Because he was a British subject, Bell was held at the prison near Berlin during WWI

Right: Hazel Deinstadt, who married Bell in 1922, worked as a nurse during the First World War



Jason Bell (no relation to Winthrop), associate professor of philosophy at the University of New Brunswick, is author of *Cracking the Nazi Code* (HarperCollins), on sale now.



scheduled. Bell's idea prevented a war that could have killed hundreds of thousands.

Uncovering national socialism

In the spring of 1919, with the help of his pro-democratic sources in German military intelligence, Bell described the birth of Nazi ideology. The reactionary far right and certain elements of the left joined forces as national socialism, with the reactionaries in the driver's seat. The unholy marriage happened at the Eden Hotel, headquarters of the violent right-wing Freikorps forces.

Before the negotiations at Eden, mediated by the German spymaster Baron von Schenck, militant nationalism and communism had been at each other's throats and democracy stayed in charge. But together, the extremists were the strongest military force in the country. Hitler's National Socialist German Workers' Party, named in 1920, was merely a step in the plot, not its origin.

In late 1919, Germany's situation became even more dire. By the autumn, Bell warned that the Nazis were the strongest organisation in Germany and could take over the country any time they wanted. They just didn't want to, yet, because the country's economic position was hopeless.

In October, Bell uncovered ambitious Nazi attack plans against Riga, Latvia, the gateway to the Baltics, with a 100,000-man army. He alerted Britain, which sent warships to bombard the invaders. Meanwhile, Bell co-operated with Germany's democratic authorities to defund the mercenaries and block arms transfers to the east.

The Baltic invasion was led by high-ranking German officers. This gave Britain the impression that it was an official government plot. If so, the Allies had reason to restart the blockade and the war. But Bell intercepted a message written by a mercenary officer, proving it was the reactionary faction behind the attack, not the official German government. The defeat of the Nazis at Riga was one of MI6's greatest victories. Yet, in the clandestine style favoured by the secret service, it was so quietly effective that it has gone virtually unnoticed in history.

In the wolf's lair

Despite helping to thwart the Baltic invasion, Bell realised that the Nazis wouldn't stop until they won or were annihilated. He created a two-part plan to destroy them at their home base in Berlin. The military side was comparatively easy: helping German democracy disband the powerful militias. The financial side would be more difficult. Bell's plan would create a partnership among the Allies, neutral nations and private financiers to supply credits so that German industry could restart. That in turn would create work for millions of unemployed soldiers, who were otherwise hired as mercenaries. Profits from German industry would mean tax revenue to fund German democracy. Then credits would be repaid with interest, and investors would make a fortune. The world's economy would be placed on firm footing, and Germany would become a close friend of Britain.

Yet despite support from prominent quarters in official Britain, influential Conservatives like Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir Austen Chamberlain blocked his proposal. Neville Chamberlain complained that Germany's credit would be spent buying materials from the United States. It was a jealous pang to the Empire's conscience. Chamberlain's refusal meant continued instability, paving the way for the Nazi rise to power. Frustrated by the inaction, Bell resigned his secret service position in 1920. In 1922, he took up a position as philosophy instructor at Harvard and married Hazel Deinstadt, a fellow Nova Scotian and former war nurse in France. Owing to prudent investments and careful saving, he retired from teaching and business pursuits before the age of 50. The Bells moved to Chester, Nova Scotia, and a life of service and contemplation.

**"CHAMBERLAIN'S REFUSAL
MEANT CONTINUED
INSTABILITY, PAVING THE WAY
FOR THE NAZI RISE TO POWER"**

In 1934, as Hitler seized power in Germany, Bell undertook his next intelligence mission into Germany. This time it was a mission for two: Hazel went with him. In Göttingen, Bell met often with his top anti-Nazi source Wilhelm Runge, a chief scientist in Germany's world-leading military radar programme.

Runge is a crucial but hitherto unnoticed figure in the Nazi defeat. Beginning with the Nazi rise to power, and continuing through the Second World War, he used his leadership position to undermine Nazi radar from within. His sabotage transformed a seemingly insurmountable Nazi radar lead before the war into a hopeless debacle by the end. Because radar superiority made a fundamental difference in the Battle of Britain, the value of his operation is virtually incalculable.

In the spring of 1939, Bell cracked the Nazis' secret plan for racial extermination and sent the revelation to his intelligence contacts. Later that year, leading Canadian newspaper *Saturday Night* published Bell's warnings under the headlines: "Exterminate Non-Germans, Dogma of Mein Kampf" and "Hitler's Extermination Policy Is Worldwide."

Bell understood the Nazis meant to kill all non-Aryans, including Jews, Slavs, Blacks and Asians, everywhere in the world. "Hitler's European policy," he wrote in *Saturday Night*, "is merely the first stage." Bell's Holocaust warning was the earliest by years. The next appeared in secret intelligence files in 1941, and in the press in 1942. Hitler's plan required utmost secrecy, but Bell was the first to lift the veil.

It is difficult to precisely calculate the impact of Bell's 1939 warning. But we know that among the intelligence contacts he alerted early in the year was his American friend Francis Deak, who was a principal figure in The Pond, predecessor organisation of the CIA. The US executive branch, despite Congressional opposition, contributed to British defence in the early stages of the war, during America's official neutrality, which may have owed to Bell's early warning.

After the war, Bell retired once again and took up writing history and reading detective stories. It was fitting leisure for one of history's greatest secret detectives. He died in Chester on 4 April 1965, in his home by the sea.

Winter Savings

SUBSCRIBE

FROM JUST £6



PLUS OFFERS ON BINDERS, GUIDES & SPECIALS



See the entire range online at

MAGAZINESDIRECT.COM/WINTER23

or phone **0330 333 1113**

Outside of the UK? See our international offers online

Offer closes 31st December 2023. Offer open to new subscribers only. Direct Debit offer is available to UK subscribers only. We will notify you in advance of any price changes. All gift subscriptions will start with the first available issue on-sale after December 2023. If you would like your gift subscription to start with an earlier issue, you can choose an earlier issue when ordering or you can contact customer services. Orders purchased for yourself will start with the next available issue - please allow up to 6 weeks for delivery (up to 8 weeks outside of the UK). Payment is non-refundable after the 14 day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. For full terms and conditions, visit www.magazinesdirect.com/terms. For enquiries please call: +44 (0)330 333 1113. Lines are open Monday-Friday, 8:30am-7pm, and Saturday, 10am-3pm GMT (excluding Bank Holidays) or e-mail: help@magazinesdirect.com. Calls from the UK to 0330 numbers will be charged at no more than a national landline call, and may be included in your phone provider's call bundle.

ROOSEVELT'S RIDERS

The future president of the United States led his Rough Riders into the history books during the Spanish-American War

In early 1898, Theodore Roosevelt was 39 years old. The scion of a wealthy and politically connected family, he had vigorously cultivated a public image – that of the adventurer, the Renaissance man and the personification of the uniquely American cowboy.

Born frail and asthmatic, the second child of businessman and philanthropist Theodore Roosevelt, Sr. and socialite Martha Stewart Bulloch Roosevelt, Teddy remembered as a six-year-old boy watching the funeral procession of President Abraham Lincoln as it coursed down Broadway in New York City in 1865. His education was the upper crust amalgamation of home school and Harvard, and he revelled in the opportunity to engage in the political discourse of the waning post-Civil War Gilded Age.

For Roosevelt, the future of America lay in its robust and vigorous men, assertive and forthright, brawny and boisterous. He had known personal tragedy, his wife and mother dying on

WORDS MICHAEL E HASKEW

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt and a group of Rough Riders stand atop San Juan Hill after the battle in July 1898

the same day in February 1884, in his New York home. At the time Roosevelt was serving as a New York State assemblyman. In response to the tremendous loss, he had relocated to his sprawling ranch in the Dakota Territory.

Roosevelt's energy there became ever more focused on the perceived virtues of manliness. The seeds of the cowboy persona grew to full flower, and he burnished his growing reputation as a naturalist and author of many well-received literary works, as well as his unbridled jingoistic national pride. Upon his return to political life, he published the four-volume series *The Winning of the West*, enhancing his status as a man's man, a powerful embodiment of American masculinity.

Personally, Roosevelt grappled with the decision his father had made 30 years earlier not to serve in the US Army during the Civil War. The son's sense of duty and affinity for martial pursuits – an affinity that some biographers have said bordered on bloodlust – were thematically persistent in his thought and political perspective. He



became known as a trust-busting Progressive Republican, governor of New York, vice president of the United States, and upon the assassination of William McKinley in 1901 the 26th president of the United States. He was a renowned author, conservationist, explorer, big game hunter and a larger-than-life 'bully' persona with his likeness later carved into the face of Mount Rushmore.

But prior to these immense achievements, Roosevelt made his name on the battlefields of the Spanish-American War (1898). When the people of Cuba rose up against the Spaniards, their lords and masters for nearly 400 years, the United States looked upon the revolt as one stoked by a yearning for freedom, to break the yoke of the oppression of Old Europe. Stories of Spanish cruelty were rife in the American press, particularly in the sensationalist 'yellow' newspapers such as Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* and its fierce rival, William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*.

For the US government, the plight of the Cubans tugged at its altruistic world view, but there were also business interests to protect hand in hand with the political opportunity for the United States to assert itself on the world stage. There was perhaps even the opportunity to acquire an empire of its own. Those of Roosevelt's camp actually saw war as the inevitable course to global ascendancy. Therefore, when the battleship USS Maine exploded and sank in Havana harbour, taking dozens of American lives, the clamour for war with Spain reached fever pitch.

Roosevelt now had his war, his chance for glory, and his stage for grand achievement in an endeavour like no other in human existence. When the government authorised the raising of volunteer regiments for the army, he swiftly resigned his cabinet post as assistant secretary of the Navy and sought the cooperation of his friend Leonard Wood,

personal physician to President McKinley. He told Secretary of War Russell A Alger that command of a cavalry regiment, while flattering, was impractical. Roosevelt's only military experience had been with the New York National Guard. Wood was a veteran of the Indian Wars. Therefore, Wood should be named commanding officer of the 1st US Volunteer Cavalry Regiment with the rank of colonel. Roosevelt would, temporarily, serve as second-in-command as lieutenant colonel.

The friends wasted no time in recruiting their new regiment. Once word got out, they were inundated with applications. In a single week, 27 sacks of mail were delivered, and more than 20,000 petitions were received. The ranks of the new regiment were to be filled with young men of diverse backgrounds, but each in his own way contributing to the ideal of the invincible and valiant American man that Roosevelt had propagandised. Among them were lawmen of the Texas Rangers, skilled riflemen and outdoorsmen of the west, and athletes and horsemen of the east, among them the sons of wealthy New York and New England families. An original complement of officers and men at 780 was increased to 1,000, and by early July 1898 the number accepted topped 1,100.

Roosevelt wrote: "All – Easterners and Westerners, Northerners and Southerners, officers and men, cowboys and college graduates, wherever they came from, and whatever their social position – possessed

in common the traits of hardiness and a thirst for adventure. They were to a man born adventurers, in the old sense of the word."

As for himself, with war declared on Spain in April 1898, Roosevelt was candid in his later personal assessment, echoing a contrasting view to that of his father years earlier: "I had always felt that if there were a serious war I wished to be in a position to explain to my children why I did take part in it, and not why I did not take part in it."

The 1st US Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, known to history as the 'Rough Riders', came together for four weeks of training in San Antonio, Texas, before moving to Tampa, Florida, for embarkation to Cuba in the spring of 1898. The origin of the name Rough Riders is somewhat obscure, but the dynamic lieutenant colonel speculated that it had come "both by the public and by the rest of the army... doubtless because the bulk of the men were from the Southwestern ranch country and were skilled in the wild horsemanship of the great plains".

The 1st US Volunteer Cavalry was incorporated into the 2nd Brigade, Cavalry Division (Dismounted), Fifth Corps. At the divisional level, General Joseph Wheeler, a former Confederate officer during the Civil War, was in command, while the corps was led by General William R Shafter, a Medal of Honor recipient for his exploits during the Indian Wars and a veteran of the Civil War.

The American host embarked from Tampa on 6 June 1898, its 16,987 soldiers, 10 million pounds (4.5 million kg) of rations, 16 artillery pieces and 2,295 horses and mules aboard a 31-ship flotilla. Also in the company were 11 foreign military observers and 89 war correspondents. One of the war reporters, Richard Harding Davis of the *New York Herald*, actually served more as a press secretary to the already well-known Roosevelt.

"ROOSEVELT NOW HAD HIS WAR, HIS CHANCE FOR GLORY AND HIS STAGE FOR GRAND ACHIEVEMENT"

Astride his horse Little Texas, Roosevelt leads the charge of the Rough Riders at San Juan Heights in this artist's interpretation



Right: Wearing the uniform of the United States Volunteers, Roosevelt sat for this striking portrait in 1898





Roosevelt leads the 1st US Volunteer Cavalry, the famed Rough Riders, in battle in this fanciful artist's rendering

This official portrait of Roosevelt as 26th president of the United States was painted by artist John Singer Sargent

Although the strategic plan for the US expedition to Cuba was not well defined, the idea was to defeat the Spanish and eject them from the island. On 22 June, the fleet anchored off Santiago de Cuba, on the southeastern shore just west of Guantanamo. Three-hundred Spanish soldiers were positioned to contest a landing at Daiquiri, 17 miles (27km) from Santiago de Cuba, but a naval bombardment and a thrust by Cuban guerrillas persuaded them to withdraw.

The subsequent landing was haphazard, as heaving surf compelled Shafter to move a few miles closer to Santiago. Still, the rough waters caused some men and pack animals to fall overboard and drown. It took four days to bring the force ashore and get organised. The occupation of Santiago was the stated War Department objective, but the tactical operation was left to Shafter and his officers to plan and execute.

The first taste of combat for the Rough Riders occurred on 24 June after Shafter received a report of 2,000 Spanish soldiers occupying the town of Las Guasimas. The American route of march toward Santiago dictated the removal of this obstacle, and a brigade led by General Samuel Young, which included the 10th US Cavalry, an all-Black unit of the regular army, and the Rough Riders, went forward.

Roosevelt praised the work of the regulars. "There was not a single straggler among them," he noted, "and in not one instance was an attempt made by any trooper to fall out in order to assist the wounded or carry back the dead, while so cool were they and so perfect their fire discipline, that in the entire engagement the expenditure of ammunition was not over ten rounds per man... The Spaniards kept up a very heavy firing, but the regulars would not be denied, and as they climbed the ridges (on the right side of the Camino Real road going into the village of Las Guasimas from the southeast) the Spaniards broke and fled."

Fifty-two American and Cuban troops were wounded and 17 killed. Eight of the casualties were Rough Riders. Spanish losses were light in comparison at seven dead and 14 wounded.

"ROOSEVELT, MOUNTED HIGH ON HORSEBACK, CHARGED THE RIFLE PITS AT A GALLOP"

However, the way to Santiago was opened. Shafter paused to build up reserves and supplies before renewing the advance on 1 July. Wood was promoted to general and given command of the 2nd Brigade, and Roosevelt took command of the Rough Riders, exulting: "I've got my regiment!"

Shafter received word that the Spanish occupied the San Juan Heights, which included the high ground of San Juan and Kettle Hills, two miles (3.2km) east of Santiago. The capture of San Juan Hill itself, rising 125ft (38m) with a fortified blockhouse at its summit, was the key immediate objective. About 400 yards (366m) northeast of San Juan Hill, the smaller rise of Kettle Hill, named for equipment used in a nearby sugar refinery, also had to be taken. With control of the heights, Shafter could lay siege to Santiago.

On 2 July, the fight for the city began as 6,600 American soldiers of General Henry Lawton's 2nd Infantry Division attacked the 500-man Spanish garrison at the village of El Caney to secure the US right flank. At the same time, Wheeler's cavalry division and the 1st Infantry Division, under General Jacob Kent, marched up the road toward San Juan Heights. Shafter expected the three divisions to coordinate the attack on the heights, but the stubborn Spaniards at El Caney kept Lawton occupied until late in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, the other US divisions assaulted San Juan Heights. As they moved ahead, Spanish artillery and rifle fire intensified. No orders to commence that general attack had been received from Shafter, but the Americans were exposed and had to either move forward or fall back. A line of advance was established around midday, and a battery of Gatling guns

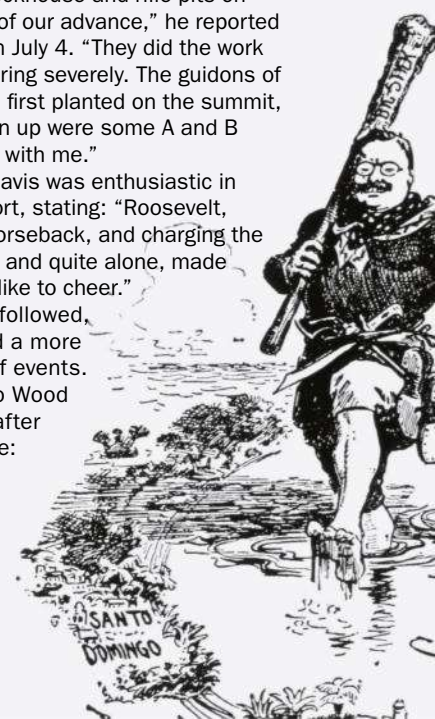
took the Spanish positions under fire from a range of about 800 yards (731m), sowing considerable destruction among the defenders.

As the attack went forward, the Americans suffered heavy casualties. Nevertheless, they were successful in driving the Spanish off San Juan Heights. The US dead and wounded amounted to about 1,300 troops, and of the 490 Rough Riders who participated, 15 were killed in action and 73 wounded. A total of 465 Spanish soldiers were killed, wounded or captured. Santiago fell to the Americans and their Cuban allies on 17 July after a two-week siege. The entire conflict ended in less than four months, and in the US it was termed a 'splendid little war'. The war brought the end of the Spanish empire and the dawning of American expansion, which included the cession of Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico from Spain.

In the immediate aftermath of the Battle of San Juan Hill, as the engagement is popularly known today, Roosevelt reported essentially that the heights had been seized following his own initiative and heroic leadership. "We moved forward until I ordered a charge, and the men rushed the blockhouse and rifle pits on the hill to the right of our advance," he reported to General Wood on July 4. "They did the work in fine shape, suffering severely. The guidons of Troop E and G were first planted on the summit, though the first men up were some A and B troopers, who were with me."

Correspondent Davis was enthusiastic in his newspaper report, stating: "Roosevelt, mounted high on horseback, and charging the rifle pits at a gallop and quite alone, made you feel you would like to cheer."

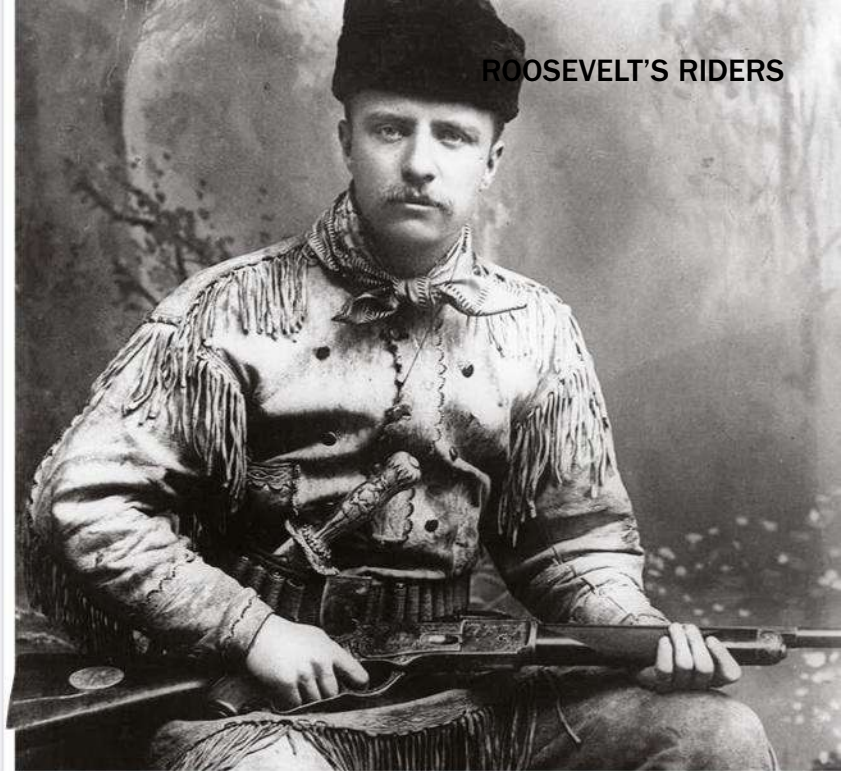
In the days that followed, Roosevelt provided a more vivid recollection of events. In his last report to Wood about four weeks after the battle, he wrote: "Accordingly we charged the blockhouse and entrenchments





Above: Roosevelt poses on horseback in San Antonio, Texas, during Rough Rider training prior to fighting in Cuba

Right: Roosevelt strikes the figure of the rugged adventurer of the American West in this 1888 photo



on the hill to our right against a heavy fire. It was taken in good style, the men of my regiment thus being the first to capture any fortified position and to break through the Spanish lines."

Within a year he had penned his war memoir, *The Rough Riders*, and expounded further on his personal bravery: "Wheeling around, I then galloped toward the hill, passing the shouting, cheering, firing men... Some forty yards from the top I ran into a wire fence and jumped off Little Texas [his horse]... Almost immediately afterward the hill was covered by the troops, both Rough Riders and the colored troops of the Ninth, and some men of the First. There was the usual confusion, and afterward there was much discussion as to exactly who had been on the hill first. The first guidons planted there were those of the three New Mexican troops, G, E and F, of my regiment."

In the post-war analysis of the battle, Roosevelt's assertions do run into some discrepancies. Although he was brave, no doubt, wounded slightly and having shot a Spanish soldier with a revolver salvaged from the wreck of the sunken Maine, the initial charge of Teddy's Volunteers occurred at Kettle Hill, not San Juan Hill as he inferred. Further, other histories aver that the first soldiers to the

top of the heights were in fact US regulars, not Roosevelt's men.

At the same time, Roosevelt coveted the prestige of the Congressional Medal of Honor and waged a determined campaign to receive it. Of course, one significant impediment was his status as a volunteer rather than an officer of the regular army. Perhaps there was also resistance due to the fact that he was a signatory to a letter that questioned the withdrawal of American troops from Cuba, which became known as the Round Robin letter and made its way into newspapers, embarrassing the McKinley administration.

These issues aside, Roosevelt was initially relentless, and he received supporting recommendations from soldiers who were there, other officers, including Generals Wood and Wheeler, and friends in high places such as Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts. He produced a veritable torrent of letters virtually demanding the award of the medal. One read gruffly: "I am entitled to the Medal of Honor, and I want it."

The response from the War Department was a rather stodgy rebuff. The recommendations were short in providing enough eyewitness confirmation that would warrant the Medal of Honor. There were conflicting accounts, and neither Wood, who also submitted a second recommendation, nor Wheeler had actually been present at the scene of the action.

At length, Roosevelt's fiery demands for the medal spewed and then began to ebb. He wrote to Senator Lodge on 6 December 1898: "If I didn't earn it, then no commissioned officer can ever earn it... I don't ask this as a favor - I ask it as a right." That tirade was followed at year-end by a more subdued letter to the senator, which must have been written after some introspection: "Now, please don't, in the midst of all your worry over big matters, do another thing in connection with the medal."

In the end, the name of Colonel Theodore Roosevelt was absent from the list of honourees when it was published. Perhaps it was a slight or blemish. Regardless, Roosevelt was immensely popular in the wake of the

Spanish-American War. Before the year was out, he was elected 33rd governor of New York. From there his political star rose rapidly, and within three years of the Battle of San Juan Hill, he was elected to the first of two terms as president of the United States.

Roosevelt remains one of the most colourful and recognised figures in American history. Knowledge of such standing might well have been a balm to the man's bruised ego.

Throughout the remainder of his political life and particularly as president, Roosevelt was a staunch advocate of America's global influence. Notably, he expanded the navy and in 1907-09 sent the "Great White Fleet" around the world in a show of military might, or "gunboat diplomacy". Meanwhile, he earned the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906 for successfully brokering the treaty that ended the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. He is credited with stating: "Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far." He flexed military and economic muscle while persuading Central American countries to cooperate with the proposed construction of the Panama Canal.

In an interesting postscript, a reconsideration of Roosevelt's exploits in Cuba led to his posthumous award of the Medal of Honor by President Bill Clinton on 16 January 2001. In fact, this was the second attempt by modern supporters. The secretary of the Army had recently turned down the revived request and was then persuaded to reverse course.

No doubt, Roosevelt would have considered the circumstance a vindication. He would further have been delighted to know that his son, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr, had received the Medal of Honor for heroism during the Second World War. At Utah Beach on D-Day, 6 June 1944, the younger Roosevelt had exhibited heroism worthy of his country's highest decoration for valour in combat.

Today, the Roosevelts, along with Arthur and Douglas MacArthur, are the only father-son recipients of the Medal of Honor. Theodore Roosevelt, hero of the Battle of San Juan Hill, is the only US president to have received such prestigious recognition.

'Gunboat diplomacy' was a hallmark of Roosevelt's presidency as he sent the USA's 'Great White Fleet' around the world



THE DEVIL'S BRIGADE

Storming Alaskan beaches, scaling Italian mountains and battling through southern France, the US-Canadian First Special Service Force earned its place in legend

WORDS ALEX BOWERS

Right: First Special Service Force's insignia, depicting a spearhead with a horizontal "USA" and vertical "CANADA" to make a T-shape, adorned the unit's uniforms



It was a name intended to strike fear into the heart of the enemy, first recorded – or so the long-debated story goes – in the pages of a German officer's journal. The entry, said to be discovered beyond the beaches of Anzio, Italy, wrote of the dreaded "Black Devils", a reference to faces camouflaged with black boot polish and devilish deeds during Allied night patrols.

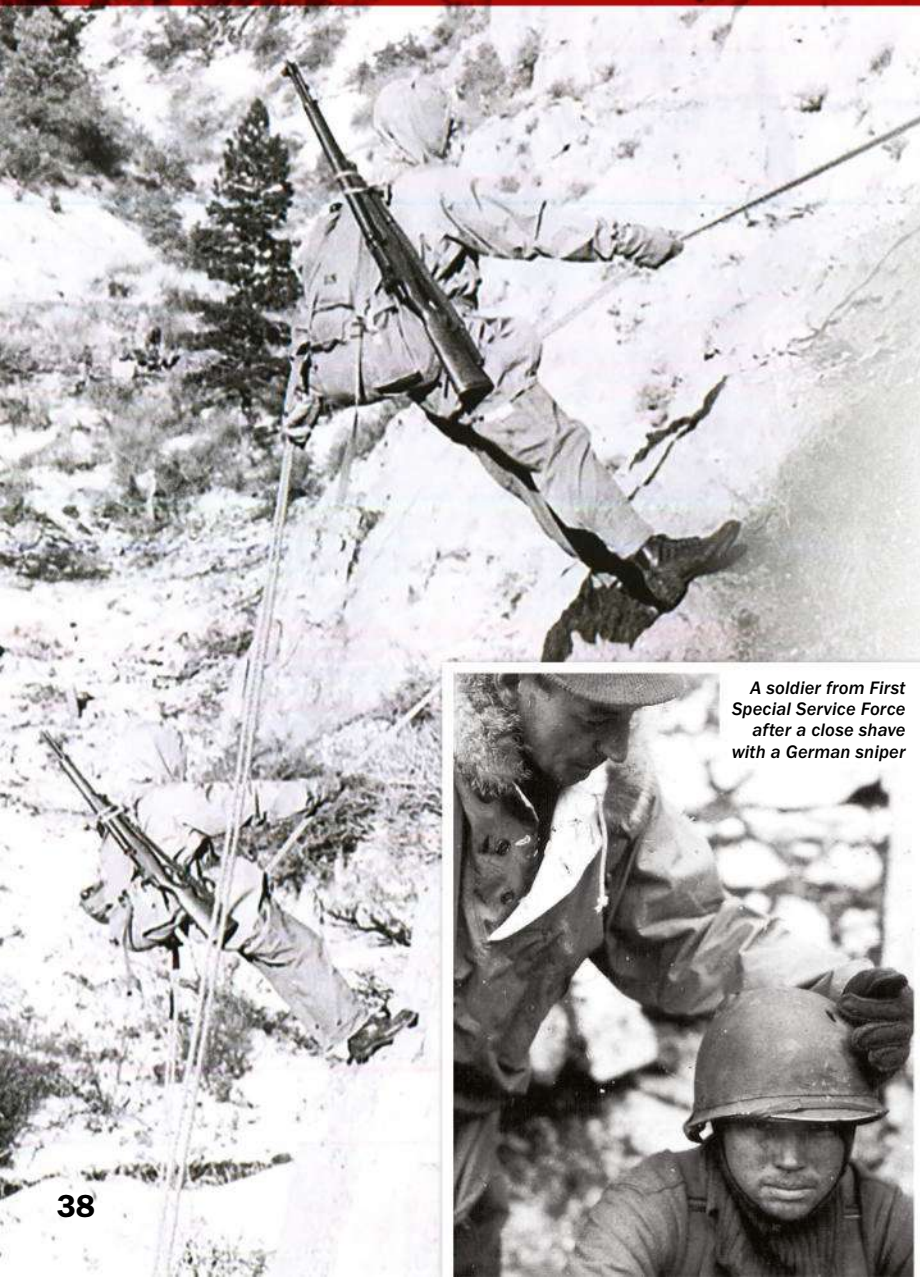
By that stage – February 1944 – the men of the US-Canadian First Special Service Force (FSSF) had acquired a reputation for engaging in psychological warfare. Calling cards, left on the bodies of dispatched German soldiers, would soon become a crucial component of the elite formation's cat-and-mouse games. Featuring FSSF's iconic red spearhead insignia – within which were the emblazoned names of both nations – the cards offered a chilling message: "Das dicke ende kommt noch!", which loosely translated as: "The worst is yet to come!" The legend of the Devil's Brigade was being born.

"A crackpot scheme"

The notion of creating such a unit had evolved not from an American or Canadian mind but that of an eccentric British inventor. "It emerges from Geoffrey Pike, that mad scientist – or mad genius – and his many ideas during the war," says Dr Tim Cook, chief historian at the Canadian War Museum. "This idea of a raiding force I think comes from a position of weakness for the Allies. We're losing on most fronts, and... we're looking for ways to strike back at the Axis forces. Pike has this interesting idea of northern winter warfare in Norway, which I think has often been derided as a crackpot scheme..."

The primary targets were to be Norwegian hydroelectric dams and natural oil reserves, infrastructure deemed strategically vital to the Axis war machine. The men tasked with eliminating these sites would be equipped with cross-country snow vehicles which would have to be built for the purpose, a mode of transport later dubbed 'the weasel'.

It was one thing to have suitable equipment. It was another thing to have troops capable of pulling off the job,





Above: One of the most famous photographs of First Special Service Force, captured during a platoon briefing outside Anzio on 20 April 1944

Left: FSSF recruits underwent an intense training programme including aircraft drops, mountain climbing, skiing and close-quarters combat

including the means to train in appropriate conditions. North America – and principally Fort William Henry Harrison in Helena, Montana, – had the ideal rugged terrain and as a result the formation of the unit became a mostly North American affair.

Nevertheless, the codenamed Project Plough got off to a rocky start when US Lieutenant Colonel Robert Frederick scrutinised the plans in May 1942. The American senior officer determined that it would fail for a multitude of logistical reasons. Curiously, however, having aired his views, the ambitious Frederick was promoted to colonel and appointed FSSF's commander. Mastermind Pike, who had first envisioned FSSF, was ultimately sidelined following the unit's official activation on 9 July 1942.

Answering the call

A recruitment drive for single men accustomed to tough work in the wilderness went out across Canada and the United States, and those who were selected were ordered to report to Fort William Henry Harrison. There, Yanks and Canucks sized each other up, with some expressing bemusement at foreign uniforms and customs. "The initial barriers were cultural, linguistic, training and weapons," says military historian Saul David, whose book *The Force* details FSSF's accomplishments. "They broke down as the two nationalities got to know each other, drank together and respected each other's martial abilities."

Equipped with American uniforms and weapons, it didn't take long for these barriers to dissipate, replaced by a clear sense of comradeship as the men embarked on a gruelling training programme. Newly arrived recruits could be expected to jump out of aircraft within days, mock hydro-turbines were used for demolition practice, and long stints were spent in the mountains learning to climb and ski. Now they needed to prove themselves in combat.

Yet fighting in Nazi-occupied Norway was not to be their calling. Their first mission would instead be Kiska in the Aleutian Islands, located off the coast of Alaska and occupied by the Japanese since June 1942. The decision to have FSSF help reclaim the US territory was somewhat of a surprise, as Dr Cook notes: "Here's this mountain warfare- and winter warfare-trained formation and they get pegged to be the spearhead of the invasion force of Kiska. That's a very strange decision... [of which] there are different interpretations."

David offers his thoughts: "[Operation Cottage is] chiefly to blood them and to prepare them for other more task-orientated missions in Europe... In the event, the Japanese had abandoned Kiska before FSSF's arrival [on 15 August 1943], but it was still a useful exercise in deployment and logistical support." Kiska had indeed not produced the anticipated combat experience, although the next time FSSF was thrust into battle, it would be for real.

"An audacious plan"

It would be in Italy, as US Fifth Army looked toward penetrating the Germans' Winter Line, that the FSSF got its chance. Dislodging the enemy from two strategic peaks – Monte la Difensa and Monte la Remetanea, both in turn part of the Camino massif – was pivotal for facilitating further Allied advances.

Having landed in Italy on 19 November 1943, FSSF reconnaissance recognised that the most obvious path to Difensa was an approach on the mountain's eastern side. Unfortunately, the open ground leading to it was a deathtrap, as previous failed attempts by other units had realised at considerable cost. One seemingly far-fetched alternative remained: to scale almost-vertical cliffs on the steeper northern face where they wouldn't be expected.

"It's an audacious plan, and it could have been an absolute disaster," says Dr Cook. "But I guess if one was to employ counter-factual history... if a single [German] sentry had been alert [during FSSF's assault], this might be a very different story... one of the great Dieppe-like disasters... But it's not – and I think it's really quite a remarkable feat of



First Special Service Force was well-prepared for the Allies' Italian mountain campaign



Above: Using black boot polish for camouflage and playing cat-and-mouse games with the Germans in Anzio, FSSF became known as the Devil's Brigade

arms... It's not a coin flip – they knew what they were doing – but it was still dangerous.”

There was at least one narrow escape with a less-than-alert German when FSSF began its ascent up the cliff on the night of 2-3 December 1943. While Sergeant Harold Van Ausdale – an American – and Sergeant Tommy Fenton – a Canadian – were securing ropes ahead of the main assault force, an enemy soldier was heard close to the rocky ledge above. Had he peered over the precipice, he would have spied the scout duo, but the two men went unnoticed and were free to carry out their preliminary work. “Their joint achievement summarises the perfect fusion of the two nationalities within the unit”, says David.

It was, however, inevitable that plans would unravel in the chaos of battle. Accounts differ around the precise sequence of events, but once all elements of the attacking group had successfully scaled the cliff, the defending 104th and 129th Panzergrenadier Regiments discovered FSSF's presence and responded. What followed were hours of fierce hand-to-hand skirmishes until the FSSF eventually prevailed. Yet the capture of Difensa would be just the half of it as the men still had to hold their tentative positions, not to mention claim the neighbouring Monte la Remetanea. Only after several days were both objectives secure, by which point FSSF had been exposed to howling winds, freezing rains, minimal shelter and relentless enemy bombardments and counterattacks. The Canadians and Americans had suffered 511 casualties, of whom 73 had been killed.

“The worst is yet to come”

FSSF's baptism of fire, as well as subsequent engagements through the Italian mountains lasting until January 1944, had showcased the unit's abilities against perilous odds. What came next was the making of the Devil's Brigade.

In Anzio, a once-promising amphibious assault intent on leapfrogging the Gustav Line (a part of the Winter Line) en route to Rome was edging closer to disaster. The Germans had encircled US Fifth Army in an approximately 15-mile (24km) pocket. It was now the task of FSSF to take the fight to the enemy with harassing nighttime raids.

The Devil's Brigade was realised in full by individuals like Sergeant Tommy Prince, an Indigenous Canadian descended from renowned Ojibwa chiefs and whose solo exploits contributed to the force's legend. Sometimes he'd creep into enemy camps and simply steal things; other times, he'd slit a single sleeping soldier's throat, to be found by their German comrades in the morning. Prince's most memorable patrol took place on 8 February 1944 while he was calling

artillery support on German armour from an abandoned farmhouse. When retaliatory shelling severed his telephone line, he coolly dressed as an Italian farmer, mimicked weeding his crops, and pretended to tie his shoelaces as he fixed the wires beneath his feet. Prince then returned to the farmhouse and continued orchestrating the Allied bombardment. For his bold actions, he was awarded the Military Medal.

“[Prince] was a respected and very effective soldier,” says Dr Cook. “In some of his war accounts, he talks about his desire to distinguish himself as an Indigenous soldier within the unit, but also I think to almost show Canadians that he, as an individual – and like all Indigenous soldiers – was doing his part and doing it very well... You have more than 4,000 Indigenous soldiers who enlist in the Canadian armed forces [in the Second World War] and likely more who may not have self-identified as such... It's also worth remembering that Indigenous people didn't have the right to vote in Canada until 1960... Tommy Prince is a proud Indigenous soldier, but also a very skilled member of First Special Service Force. And I think that is really critical.”

“Ground-and-pound warfare”

FSSF's role in the war was not yet over after Anzio, although its use in the field shifted with the Allies' needs. Casualties took their toll on the group, but it would still hold the accolade of being one of the first formations to enter Rome, on 4 June 1944. The unit later participated in the invasion of southern France amid the August 1944 Operation Dragoon.

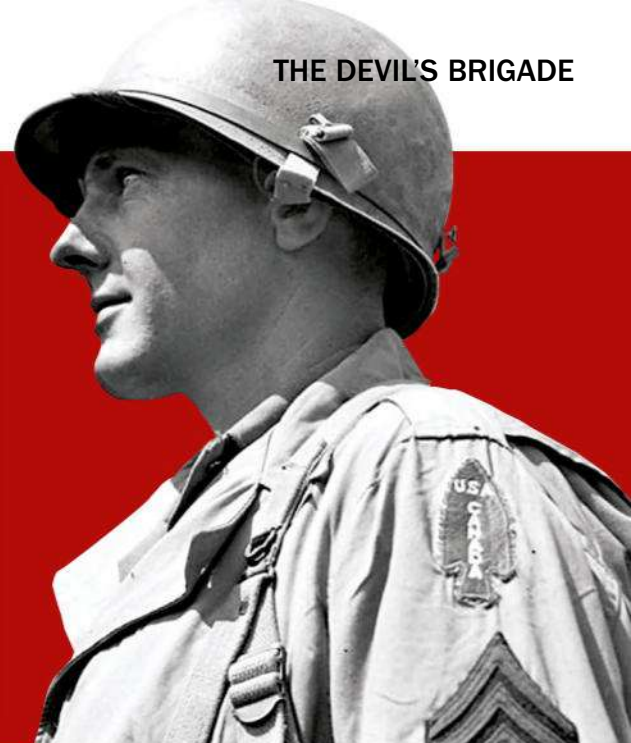
“At this point [FSSF] is part of a much larger invasion force fighting their way forward,” says Dr Cook. “I would also emphasise that Operation Dragoon is almost completely forgotten – I think even among people who know the Second World War well... It was a very important operation for opening up those logistical ports, which we don't often think about in war. We're drawn more to the daring operations. But that's an important operation to allow the Allied armies to keep moving forward [through Nazi-occupied Europe]... But it's hard to see [FSSF] beyond Anzio and into France as a special forces unit... It's then largely an infantry unit.”

Despite suffering fewer casualties than in Italy, the attritional nature of the FSSF's war had ground it down. Already by that stage the newly promoted Brigadier General Robert Frederick – replaced as commander that month by



Above: FSSF became one of the first Allied units to enter Rome, on 4 June 1944

Above, right: A Devil's Brigade sergeant wearing the distinctive "USA-CANADA" spearhead shoulder title in Anzio, 20 April 1944



the controversial Colonel Edwin Walker – had expressed concerns about the formation's reduced combat strength. It appeared all but inevitable that disbandment of the unit was on the not-too-distant horizon.

"I think it's pretty clear there are two factors [influencing the eventual decision to disband]," says Dr Cook. "One, of course, is the reinforcement crisis... Because of the casualties of the hard fighting, it becomes harder and harder to find reinforcements. And really after Difensa, the unit changes very significantly because of the high casualties there, and at Anzio, and other places, so the unit changes many times over, which is not of course unique to Devil's Brigade... But the problem really became the [overall] Canadian reinforcements [resulting in FSSF members replacing regular army casualties]."

"The second part to that is that this unit was raised for mountain warfare or for winter warfare. And it just doesn't have that opportunity to fight in those situations. So it really becomes a part of an American fighting formation in a ground-and-pound type of warfare. And that's quite different than what it had trained for. It's still very successful in France, and yet these two factors ultimately lead to the disbandment [on 5 December 1944]... It's a glamorous, or glamorised, unit and yet in the end it's done in through more mundane administrative issues – not to frame casualty re-employment reinforcement as mundane – but it's necessary for every unit."

The story of FSSF drew to a close in a French field outside Villeneuve-Loubet. Orders were given for the Canadians to step out of the line, an emotional moment for both nations. "It was never Canucks and Yanks," wrote FSSF member Robert Burhans. "The pervading thought that tied the men together under their leadership was the esprit of the Force itself." Scouts Tommy Fenton and Howard Van Ausdale, who had scaled Monte la Difensa together, parted ways as the former departed from the ranks. So, too, did Prince, whose exploits, now in the Canadian Army and stretching to the Korean War, were far from over. Though there remained an overwhelming sense of sadness among comrades who were due to reinforce various formations, the legend of the Devil's Brigade had been sealed.

"Enduring honor"

Today, FSSF lives on through special forces units that claim to be direct successors, chief among them the United States Army Special Forces (or Green Berets) and the Canadian Special Operations Regiment (CSOR). Both formations jointly host surviving veterans at a special event each year in honour of their contributions. Furthermore, numerous books – including David's *The Force* – and the 1968 film *The Devil's Brigade*, have long captured imaginations, standing testament to the prevailing legacy of the men who served.

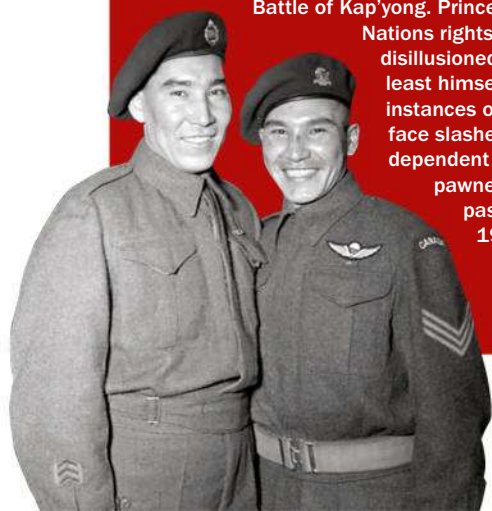
"Because it was a unique formation – a North American formation – and the only one of its type, it has lived on in mythology as a symbol of the co-operation between Canada and the United States," says Dr Cook, some of whose books, including *Fight to the Finish: Canadians in the Second World War 1944-1945*, discuss FSSF. "And, in fact, it was a symbol during the war. The press, the journalists who travelled with the unit in 1944, talked about it in those lines and used it as a symbol to represent the larger war effort of the North American nations... It has been a symbol ever since, but I think it has evolved into a symbol of a sort of elite Ranger-like special forces, and it certainly had its origins in that."

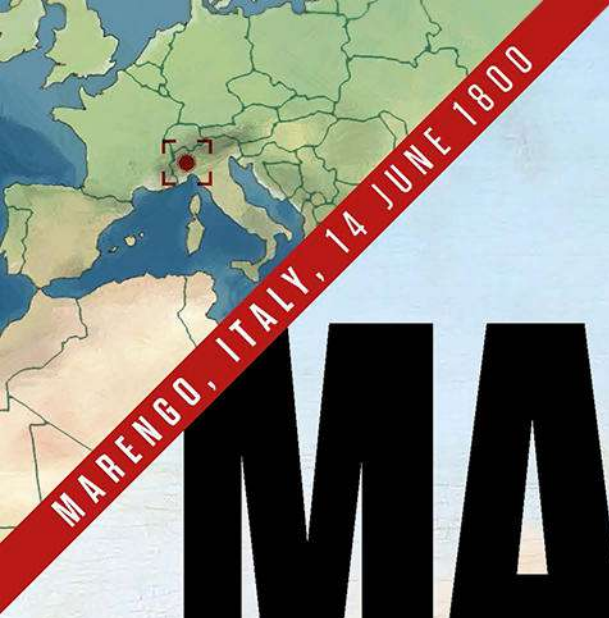
David also deferred to some immortalising words from the press when asked about how FSSF is still remembered: "Sholto Watt, the Canadian war reporter, summed it up best. The Force's real importance, he wrote, was that it was the 'first joint force of its kind, drawn from two neighbour democracies, and that it was a brilliant success throughout'. It is this 'example of international brotherhood', he wrote, 'which deserves enduring honor'."

THE POST-WAR STRUGGLES OF TOMMY PRINCE

Indigenous Canadian soldier Tommy Prince continued to serve with distinction after First Special Service Force, later enlisting in 2nd Battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (2 PPCLI) at the outbreak of the Korean War. There, among other actions, he participated in Canada's stalwart defence of Hill 677 amid the April 1951 Battle of Kap'Yong. Prince likewise became a prominent figure in the First Nations rights movement. However, he became increasingly disillusioned by the ill-treatment of Indigenous people, not least himself. The Canadian veteran experienced countless instances of discrimination and prejudice, once having his face slashed with a broken bottle. Destitute and alcohol-dependent on the streets of Winnipeg, Prince ultimately pawned his war medals to help make ends meet. He passed away in a veterans' hospital in November 1977, aged 62.

Sergeant Tommy Prince, MM, (right) stands beside his brother, Private Morris Prince, at the investiture at Buckingham Palace





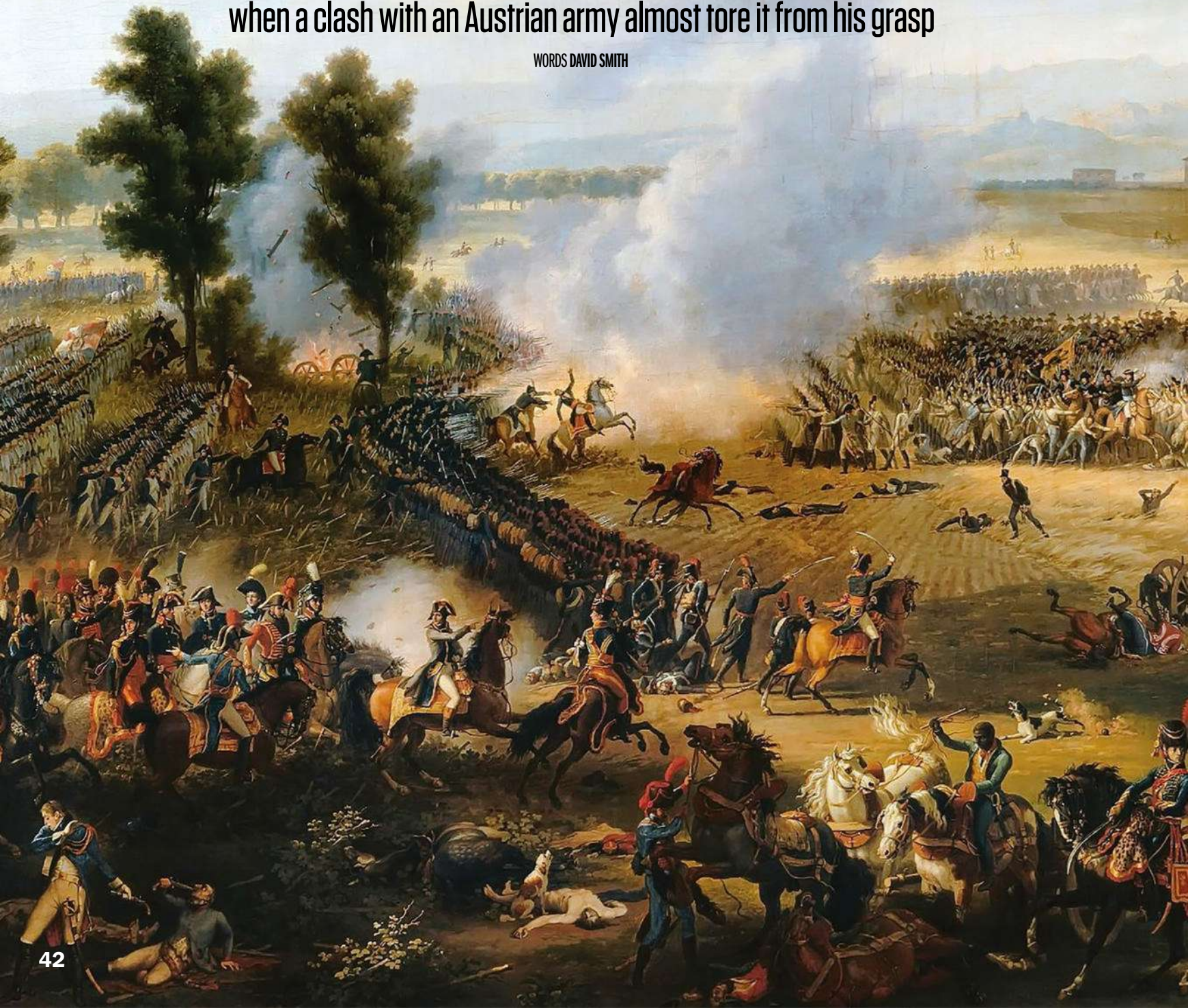
Great Battles



MARENGO

Napoleon had only just taken hold of post-revolutionary France when a clash with an Austrian army almost tore it from his grasp

WORDS DAVID SMITH



When Austrian troops advanced to attack two French divisions near Marengo, Italy, on 14 June 1800, Napoleon Bonaparte was shocked. Fully expecting the Austrians to avoid a fight, he had detached several of his divisions to block potential escape routes, and he didn't arrive at the battlefield himself until the French situation was almost lost.

The French and Austrian armies were evenly matched, each numbering around 31,000, although the Austrians held a significant advantage in artillery (100 guns to just 40), but Napoleon's decision to disperse his forces meant he was facing the full strength of his enemy with just 22,000 men and 20 guns.

Disaster loomed as he tried to slow the Austrian advance, buying time for the return of his scattered divisions. Whether or not any of them could get back to the battlefield before the Austrians won a decisive victory would determine Napoleon's fate. He stood on the brink of a humiliating failure from which he might never recover.

Prelude to battle

Napoleon had built his reputation in Italy. Taking command of a bedraggled and listless Army of Italy in 1796, he reinstalled fighting vigour and led it to a series of sweeping

victories that announced the arrival of a bold and innovative commander. By the end of the year, most of Italy was under French control and in 1797 Napoleon took the offensive into Austria, eventually persuading his exhausted enemy to accept a peace treaty, the short-lived Peace of Campo Formio.

Napoleon then embarked on a daring campaign in Egypt, before returning home to take a position in a new three-man consulate to rule France. Quickly establishing himself as First Consul, he recognised the need for a period of peace after years of fighting. The Second Coalition against France had all but collapsed, but Austria remained hostile and needed to be persuaded to accept peace once more. Most of his gains in Italy had subsequently been lost back to the Austrians, and Napoleon now set about recovering them and forcing peace upon his principal enemy.

Planning for the Italian campaign included the adoption of a new corps system for his armies. The use of corps (self-contained, all-arms units of two or three divisions, able to operate independently as small armies) was not a new idea, having been tried over the previous decade, but now Napoleon made their adoption general through the entire army.

Although the leader of the republic, Napoleon did not yet have dictatorial powers. He was not technically allowed to command an army, but

OPPOSING FORCES

		
AUSTRIAN ARMY		FRENCH ARMY
LEADERS Michael von Melas, Andreas Graf von O'Reilly, Peter Karl Ott von Bátorkéz, Karl Graf Hadik, Freiherr von Kaim, Johann Maria Philipp Frimont		LEADERS Napoleon Bonaparte, Claude-Victor Perrin, Jean Lannes, Louis Desaix, François Étienne de Kellermann
INFANTRY 23,000		INFANTRY 27,000
CAVALRY 8,250		CAVALRY 3,900
ARTILLERY 100		ARTILLERY 40

Chaos reigns in this painting of the battle by Louis-François, Baron Lejeune



01 THE AUSTRIANS MOVE OUT

At 8am, Melas orders his men forward, but the two temporary bridges across the Bormida are only 115ft (35m) apart and lead to the same road, so it takes time for the whole Austrian army to cross.

ALESSANDRIA

02 FIRST ENGAGEMENT

Only one French division is present, but the slow crossing of the Austrian army allows it to confront the first units until forced to fall back over the only bridge across the Fontanone stream.

CITADEL

La Barbotta

Pavone

MARENGO

Castel-Ceriol

03 MARENGO UNDER ATTACK

More and more Austrian units are fed into a number of assaults on Marengo. The French turn them back but are increasingly outnumbered.

04 LANNES TO THE RESCUE

A second French division arrives just in time, extending the French defensive line at Marengo and preventing it from being outflanked, but the situation is still desperate as more Austrian units are brought to bear on the defenders.

05 BATORKEZ'S COLUMN

A formidable column of Austrians takes possession of Castel Ceriolo, but is unsure of the whereabouts of the main French army. It is therefore not committed to the fight, where its weight might have proved decisive.

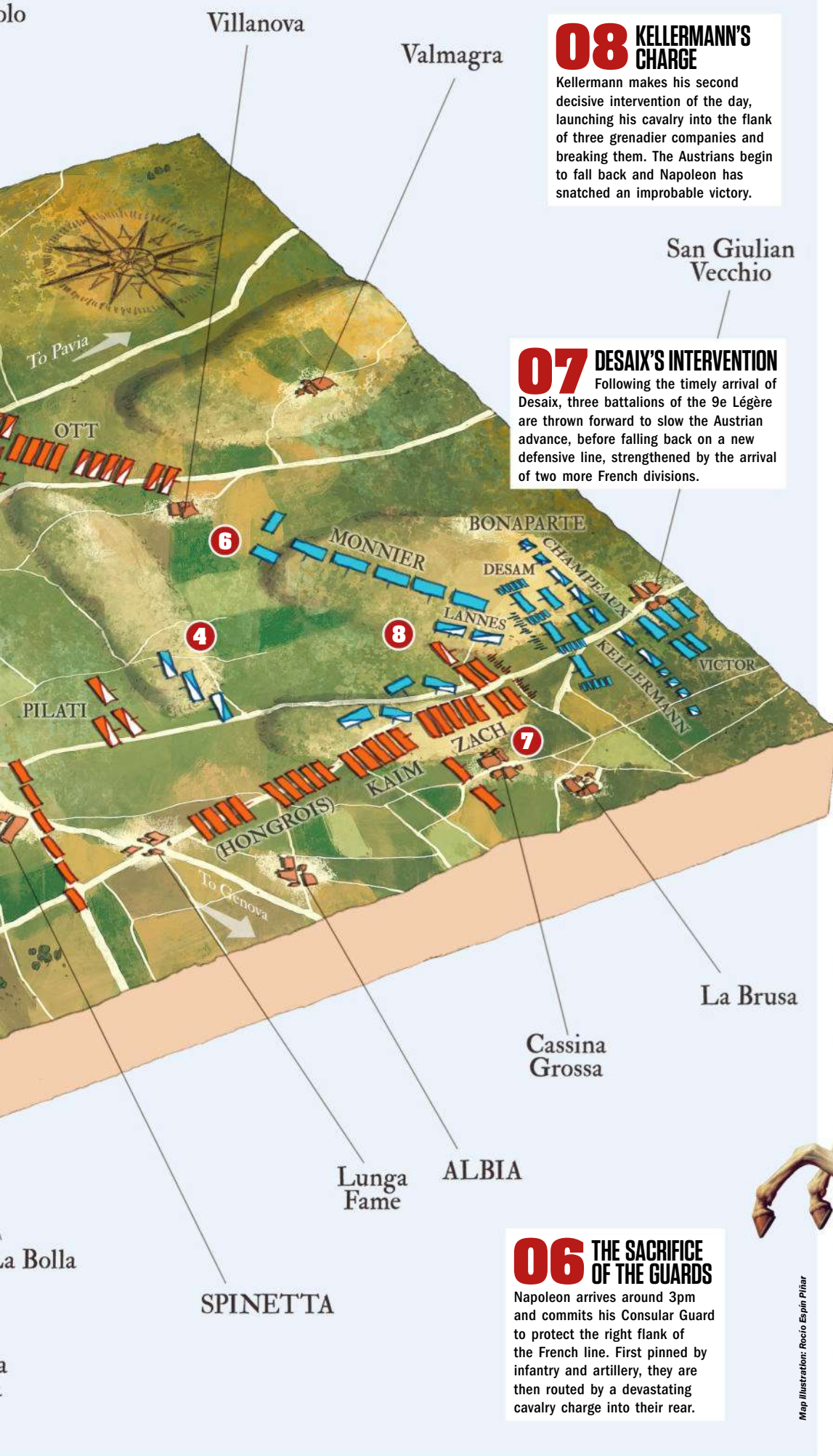
AUSTRIAN 
FRENCH 

0 0.5 1 2km

La Moglia

Cassina
Blanca

blo



08 KELLERMANN'S CHARGE

Kellermann makes his second decisive intervention of the day, launching his cavalry into the flank of three grenadier companies and breaking them. The Austrians begin to fall back and Napoleon has snatched an improbable victory.

07 DESAIX'S INTERVENTION

Following the timely arrival of Desaix, three battalions of the 9e Légère are thrown forward to slow the Austrian advance, before falling back on a new defensive line, strengthened by the arrival of two more French divisions.

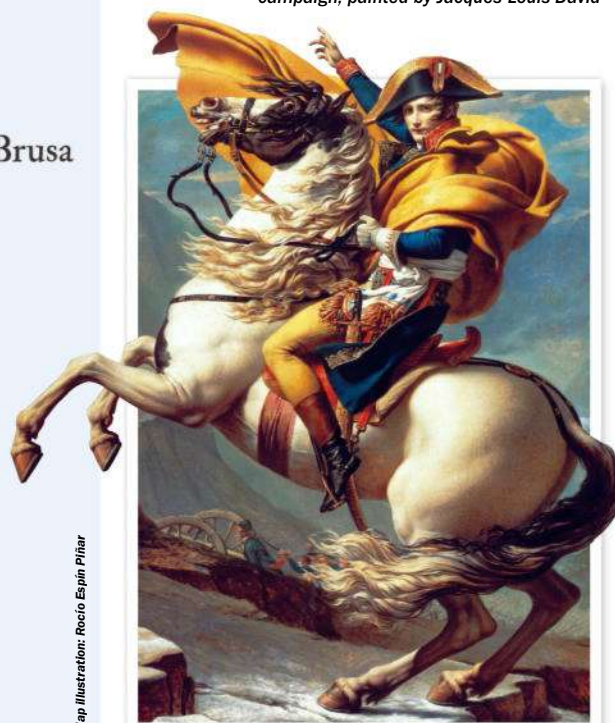
wasn't about to let such a minor detail hold him back. He had two main forces to work with: the Army of the Rhine (120,000-strong, under Jean Victor Marie Moreau) and the Army of Italy (36,000, under André Masséna). Napoleon favoured working with the larger force but could not usurp Moreau, who enjoyed fierce support from his men. Italy therefore became the target once more, and the formation of an Army of Reserve gave him the tool to work with. Napoleon planned to descend on Italy through the Alpine passes with his new army and hit the Austrians, engaged with Masséna's Army of Italy, in the rear.

The Austrians were far from idle, and by the time Napoleon began his march through the Great St Bernard Pass, Masséna was under siege in Genoa. Despite having promised to march to his aid, Napoleon instead moved westwards to take Milan, also picking up a reinforcing division from Moreau. (Napoleon had asked for a corps, but the independently minded Moreau was unwilling to detach that many men from his army.)

The stage was now set for a confrontation between Napoleon and Michael von Melas, commanding the Austrians. Having forced Masséna's surrender on 4 June, Melas moved his 32,000 men to Alessandria, between Turin and Genoa, and awaited Napoleon's approach.

Miscalculations on both sides now shaped the coming battle. Melas fed the French with false intelligence that made it sound like he was planning to withdraw from Alessandria. Not entirely duped, but also not wanting his quarry to escape, Napoleon allowed this to enter into his planning – he detached three divisions (two under Louis Desaix, a veteran of the Egyptian campaign) to block potential escape routes for the Austrians. At the same time, Melas thought his trickery had been swallowed whole, and expected

A romanticised depiction of Napoleon crossing the Alps prior to his 1800 Italian campaign, painted by Jacques-Louis David



Map illustration: Rocio Espin Piliar

06 THE SACRIFICE OF THE GUARDS

Napoleon arrives around 3pm and commits his Consular Guard to protect the right flank of the French line. First pinned by infantry and artillery, they are then routed by a devastating cavalry charge into their rear.

Napoleon to move towards Sale. He planned to cross the Bormido and attack the French as they marched.

The bridgehead

When Napoleon's advanced units (a division under Claude-Victor Perrin) reached Marengo, they clashed with the Austrian bridgehead on the eastern side of the Bormido. Two pontoon bridges gave Melas the means to cross his entire force, but the French were unaware of them and believed that the Austrian units on their side of the river were merely a rearguard to cover a withdrawal.

At the same time, Melas believed he was dealing with an isolated French force and was not expecting it to receive support from Napoleon. Sharp fighting erupted, with neither side understanding what was actually going on. As the fighting died away and night fell, nobody believed a major battle would be fought around Marengo the next morning.

At 8am on 14 June, Melas began to move his men over the Bormido in force, expecting to brush aside limited French resistance and march to intercept the French on their way to Sale. A 57-year-old Irishman, Andreas Graf von O'Reilly, led the first column over the pontoon bridges into the difficult terrain around Marengo.

The weather was good, but there were several factors to hamper military movements.

"AS THE SITUATION THREATENED TO GET OUT OF HAND FOR THE FRENCH, LANNES' DIVISION ARRIVED AND INSTANTLY SHORED UP THE RIGHT WING"

Ditches, hedges and bushes punctuated the farmland around the village of Marengo, with corn standing 6ft (1.8m) high in some places. Vine plantations also hindered visibility, meaning that both sides had a limited view of what their enemy was up to.

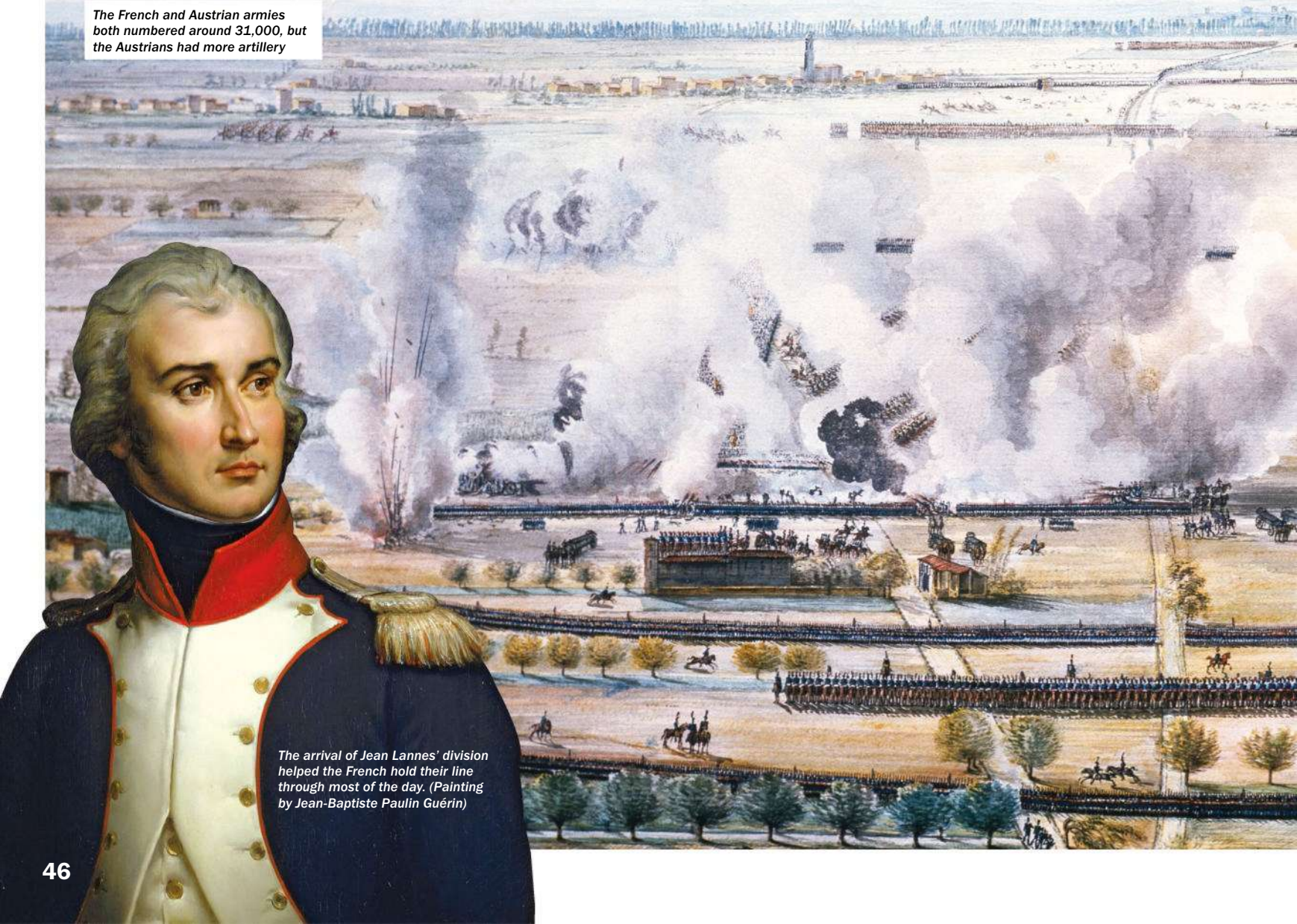
The French advanced guard, under Claude Matthieu, Count Gardanne, was driven back onto Pedrabona and then across the Fontanone, a narrow but deep stream. A second French division, under Jean Lannes, was on its way, but Napoleon still believed this was nothing more than the Austrian rearguard and was more concerned with preventing Melas from escaping. With the French commander unwilling to commit the rest of his force to Marengo, the Austrians enjoyed a massive superiority in the developing engagement.

Perrin's single division now found itself dealing with four Austrian divisions. That of O'Reilly was moving past the left flank of Gardanne's men, while three further divisions (under Karl Graf Hadik, Freiherr von Kaim and Johann Maria Philipp Frimont) advanced on Marengo. The Austrian assault, however, was not well handled. At first it was bogged down and then flung back by determined French resistance, Hadik being mortally wounded in the process. A second assault was launched at 10:30am, with Kaim's division now spearheading the attack on Marengo. Other units swung to their left and took advantage of the Austrians' numerical superiority, making good progress through lightly defended territory to Barbotta farm.

As the situation threatened to get out of hand for the French, Lannes' division arrived and instantly shored up the right wing, evicting the Austrians from Barbotta farm and stabilising the position. As Austrian troops continued to cross the two bridges, however, it was only a matter of time before their numbers became overwhelming.

By now the sounds of a major confrontation, carrying to Napoleon's headquarters, were unmistakable, and he realised that he had been fooled. Messengers were sent to recall the detached divisions from their now pointless missions. The message to Desaix in particular gives an insight into Napoleon's level of anxiety

The French and Austrian armies both numbered around 31,000, but the Austrians had more artillery



The arrival of Jean Lannes' division helped the French hold their line through most of the day. (Painting by Jean-Baptiste Paulin Guérin)

over developments: "Melas has attacked me first: For God's sake, come up if you still can!"

Napoleon had personally called for Desaix to return to France from Egypt, having a high regard for the man. His faith was to be justified – some sources claim Desaix had already heard the battle around Marengo and was doing what any good general would, marching to the sound of the guns, before Napoleon's message arrived. Whatever the truth, Desaix was on his way back, and whether or not he could bring his 9,000 men up in time would probably decide the outcome of the battle.

The French overwhelmed

A third Austrian column, commanded by Peter Karl Ott von Bátorkéz, had crossed the Bormida, and moved northeast to occupy the village of Castel Ceriolo. Numbering around 8,000 men, this could have delivered a crushing blow to the beleaguered French around Marengo, but Bátorkéz was confused. According to Austrian intelligence, Napoleon's main body ought to have been moving towards Sale, further to the northeast, but Bátorkéz's cavalry scouts confirmed that there were no French units in that direction. Clearly, the Austrians had made a mistake in their planning, but this left Bátorkéz uncertain of how to proceed. If he flung his men to the southwest, against Perrin and Lannes, he



A depiction of the French cavalry charge led by Francois Etienne de Kellermann



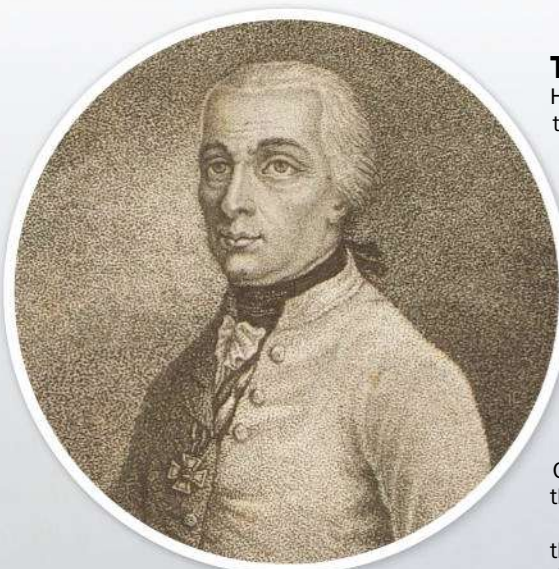
Below: The Austrian general Karl Joseph Hadik fell in the initial assault on the French position at Marengo

might find himself attacked in the rear by the French under Napoleon. Bátorkéz made a compromise: he sent most of his advance force to attack Lannes in the flank, while keeping the bulk of his column to the north of Castel Ceriolo. Dragoons were sent on a scouting mission to the east to try and locate Napoleon.

Hard-pressed, Lannes deployed his reserve units and grimly held on, but the pressure was becoming intolerable. On the other side of the battlefield, nine squadrons of Austrian cavalry were dispatched across the Fontanone to bear down on Gardanne's left flank, but they were routed by 640 heavy cavalry under François Étienne de Kellermann, who sent them piling back into the stream in chaos. The French position was saved, at least temporarily, but a nightmarish situation was developing along the banks of the Fontanone. With only the narrow stream between them, opposing ranks of infantry exchanged musketry at close range.

With the French guarding the only bridge across the stream, Austrian pioneers arrived to assemble temporary crossings. Seeing that this was taking too much time, the local commanding officer ordered a party of men to stand in the water and form a human bridge, allowing a battalion to cross.

Lannes saw that his position was becoming untenable. After three hours of fighting his men



The 71-year-old Austrian commander, Michael Friedrich Freiherr von Melas, had served in the Austrian Army since the age of 17

were tired and running low on ammunition, and Austrian units were now moving across the Fontanone. Units from Bátorkéz's column were called for and added their weight to the Austrian tide, which was becoming irresistible. By 2:30pm, the French were withdrawing and a huge cheer went up from the Austrians, who believed they had won the day.

The arrival of the First Consul

Half an hour later, Napoleon arrived to see two battered French divisions setting up a new defensive position, under threat of encirclement on both flanks. With limited resources on hand and with multiple weak points to reinforce, Napoleon chose to commit his best infantry in a desperate attempt to buy time for Desaix to arrive.

Austrian mounted units saw a new French formation advancing through cornfields, the tops of their headgear (displaying red plumes) clearly visible. The column was small, only around 800 men, but the plumes identified the men as the Consular Guard. Napoleon was making his last throw of the dice.

Ordered in to support Lannes' right flank, the Guards became embroiled in a close-range duel with two Austrian battalions of the 51st Regiment. Due to superior artillery support (the Guards had just four four-pounder guns), the Austrians held the upper hand, and after a prolonged exchange of fire they prepared to charge home with the bayonet.

As the Guards braced, they were hit in the rear of their left flank by four squadrons of light dragoons, supported by Jäger zu Pferde, mounted riflemen. The Guards were crushed. Around 400 were taken prisoner, with a small group of around a hundred managing to escape with the colours.

Jean Broc's painting captures the moment when Napoleon was presented with the lifeless body of General Desaix at the end of the battle





Napoleon is saluted by his men after the battle which saw heavy losses on both sides

It appeared as if the battle was over. Exhausted Austrian infantry began to scatter to search for food and water in the sultry afternoon heat. Around 3,000 French prisoners were being led away and all over the battlefield the wounded cried out for attention.

Melas believed the day was won and was personally battered, having suffered two falls during the day. Giving orders for his men to pursue the retreating French, he retired to his base at Allessandria to rest. Kaim was left in charge of the pursuit of Napoleon's army.

French sniper fire was all the Austrians had to fear now as they swept forward in pursuit. Napoleon attempted to form up a new defensive line and was overjoyed when Desaix appeared at around 5pm, bedraggled from his frantic race to rejoin his commander.

With two relatively fresh divisions to play with, Napoleon's first thought was to secure his retreat. He suggested to Desaix that Jean Boudet's division (5,300 men, 240 cavalry and six guns) ought to be thrown in to screen the withdrawal.

Desaix saw things differently. Whether he recognised that the Austrian pursuit was losing shape and cohesion, or whether he just had a gut instinct that they would be flagging after a day of brutal fighting, he saw the potential in launching a counterattack, but time would need to be bought to allow for reorganisation.

Among the troops of Boudet's division was the 9e Légère, a regiment of light infantry, three battalions strong. These men were

ordered to delay the Austrian pursuit and then fall back on a newly formed French line – 2,000 light infantrymen duly engaged the 11th Infantry Regiment of the Austrians, sending them reeling in disorder. Austrian grenadiers advanced to maintain pressure on the French, and the 9e Légère fell back, until Kellermann saw an opportunity to disrupt the Austrians once more, launching a cavalry charge into their left flank. At the same moment, the 9e Légère pushed forward and three Austrian grenadier battalions were shattered. The price was high, as Desaix fell mortally wounded in the attack, but Austrian momentum had been broken. A victory was quickly turning into a stunning defeat.

The tables turn

One last chance remained for the Austrians to win their battle for a second time. Bätorkéz's column, largely untroubled during the day's fighting, was still intact to the north. He was deploying into line to hit the advancing French in the flank, but at the last moment decided it would be best to preserve his men and withdrew back towards Castel Ceriolo.

Napoleon pressed the retreating men, aware of the danger they still posed, but as darkness fell Bätorkéz's men found their way back to the main Austrian army. The battle was over and by around 8pm the opposing armies were in much the same positions in which they had started the day.

Austrian casualties were high, with almost 1,000 dead, 5,500 wounded and nearly 3,000 captured. French losses were, if anything, a little higher, although they attempted to downplay the severity of the battle by claiming only 700 casualties, a ludicrously low figure.

By the end of the year the Austrians had agreed to a new peace treaty, which was signed in February 1801. Napoleon, having so narrowly avoided a humiliating defeat that might have ended his career and would certainly have undermined his authority as First Consul, had secured his position. Taking advantage of a period of precious peace, he began work on reorganising his army. The old Royal/Republican Army would be reformed, and the Grande Armée would soon be unleashed upon Europe in wars that would rage until his eventual defeat at Waterloo, 15 years later.

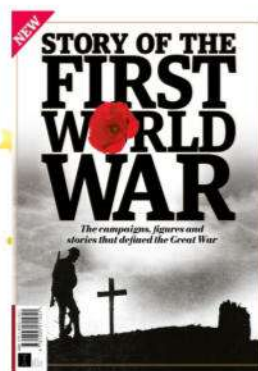
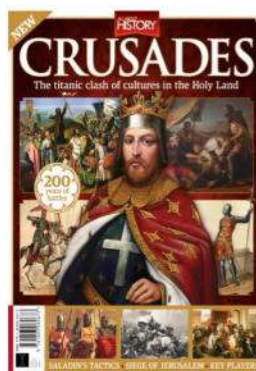
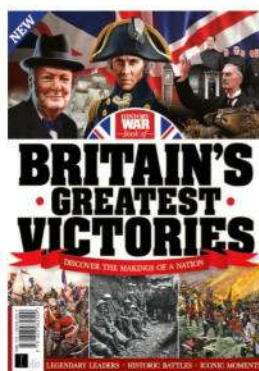
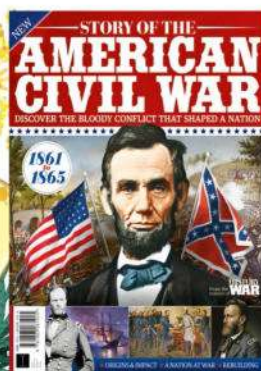
FURTHER READING

- David Hollins, *The Battle of Marengo 1800* (Osprey)
- James R Arnold, *Marengo and Hohenlinden: Napoleon's Rise to Power* (Leo Cooper)
- Gunther Rothenberg, *The Napoleonic Wars* (Cassell)
- Richard Holmes (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford University Press)

SPECIAL OFFER
SUBSCRIBE TODAY &

—SAVE—
40%

PLUS GET 4 FREE BOOKS*



Visit www.magazinesdirect.com/howxmas
or call 0330 333 1113 & quote XL59



REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE...

- ★ Never miss an issue: Get *History of War* delivered direct to your door and device every month
- ★ Get 4 free books worth over £40 – perfect stocking stuffers
- ★ Pay less than you would in the shops



PRINT EDITION

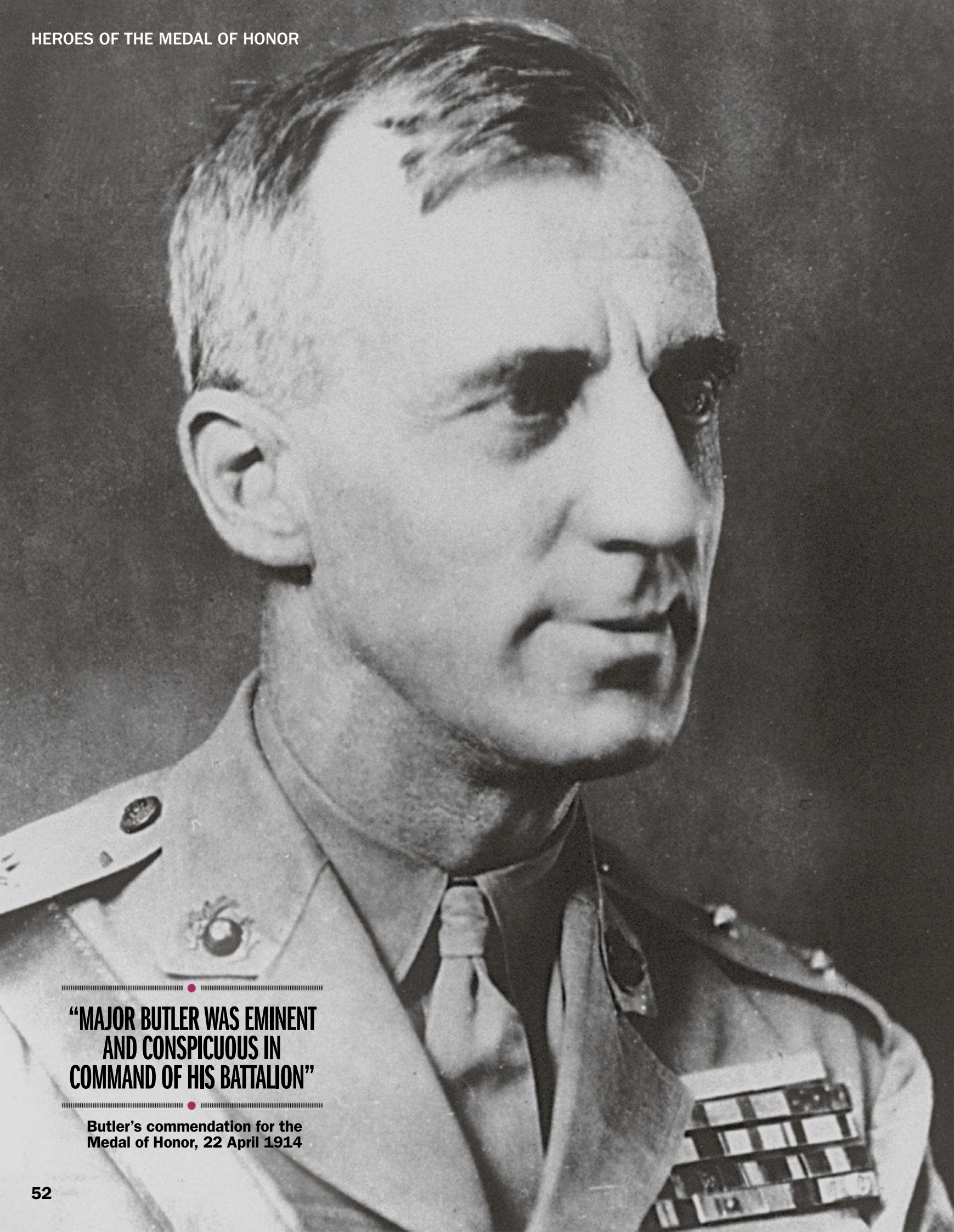
£43.99 DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR



DIGITAL EDITION

ONLY £37.99 (NO GIFT INCLUDED)





**“MAJOR BUTLER WAS EMINENT
AND CONSPICUOUS IN
COMMAND OF HIS BATTALION”**

**Butler's commendation for the
Medal of Honor, 22 April 1914**



Heroes of the Medal of Honor

SMEDLEY BUTLER

Major General Butler dedicated his life to serving his country, and his experiences in the heat of battle gave him a unique perspective on war

WORDS MICHAEL E HASKEW

Chaos reigned on the approach to the town of Tientsin. At the height of the Boxer Rebellion, a multinational military contingent was intent on protecting the international legation in the Chinese capital city of Peking from marauding revolutionaries.

Lieutenant Smedley Butler of the US Marines crouched as Boxer bullets whined around him. When Butler saw a fellow officer grievously wounded, however, he had to act. Sprinting from the safety of a trench, Butler reached the stricken officer only to be shot in the leg himself. Another brave Marine rushed to them, and he, too, was wounded. Miraculously, the three Marines dragged themselves to safety.

When the successful Gaselee Expedition had concluded, Butler's mentor and commanding officer, Major Littleton Waller, recommended him for the Medal of Honor for gallantry on 13 July 1900. While four enlisted men did receive their nation's highest honour for Tientsin, Butler was not eligible since he was a commissioned officer. Instead, he became one of only 20 Marines to receive the Marine Corps Brevet Medal for heroism. The Brevet Medal was not authorised until 1921, and the decoration was presented to Butler soon afterwards.

In Butler's case, the Brevet Medal was equivalent to the Medal of Honor, and it marked a career that would include an extraordinary award of the actual Medal of Honor on two occasions, as well as one of the

most controversial military perspectives in US history. Butler served in the US Marine Corps for three decades, and during that time he participated in numerous actions during the Spanish-American War, the so-called Banana Wars and the First World War period.

The son of Quakers, Butler shook off his pacifist upbringing at the age of 16, lied about his age and enlisted in the Marine

Corps in the spring of 1898. His father, Thomas Butler, served as a US Congressman from Pennsylvania for more than 30 years and at times had a hand in the future of his military-minded son.

Butler served in Guantanamo, Cuba and aboard the armoured cruiser USS New York during the Spanish-American War, and after contemplating separation from the service,



Young officer Butler (sitting far right) with other Marine Corps officers during their time in Veracruz, Mexico



Butler inspecting a Marine barracks in Shanghai, China, 1914

HISTORY OF WAR
**MEDAL
OF HONOR
HEROES**
IS ON SALE NOW



he accepted a Marine Corps 1st lieutenant's commission in early 1899. Spain had ceded the Philippines to the US when the war ended, and Butler was assigned to a post in Manila. Long periods of boredom led to a flirtation with alcoholism.

The defining moment of Butler's military future occurred in October when he commanded 300 Marines assigned to take the town of Noveleta from Filipino soldiers. When the rifles crackled, Butler was briefly unnerved. It was his first time under fire, but the young officer collected himself and led his command to victory, even though his first sergeant had been shot while close by and one Marine was killed along with ten wounded.

Within a few months Butler was hand-picked by Major Waller to join the expedition to China. Waller wrote a glowing report of Butler's conduct during the Gaselee Expedition while recommending a medal "for the admirable control of his men in all the fights of the week, for saving a wounded man at the risk of his own life and under a very severe fire". The budding hero was promoted to brevet captain.

Butler was a career Marine officer during a period of regular US intervention in the

domestic affairs of Latin American countries. He served in numerous expeditions during the early years of the 20th century and came to the conclusion that such interventions, and subsequently the deaths, wounds and illnesses suffered by American forces, were the horrendous consequences of the government's determination to preserve and extend American business interests. He was destined to become a champion of anti-war activism, but ironically he received two Medals of Honor upon retirement from the Marine Corps in 1931.

After his baptism of fire in the Philippines, Butler was detailed to Puerto Rico in 1903. Amid rumours of a burgeoning revolution in Honduras, he was ordered to that country in support of a naval show of force. Leading his men ashore, Butler noted that the mere presence of US Marines seemed to quell the violence. When ordered to protect the American consulate in the city of Trujillo, the Marines marched in. A firefight between government troops and rebels ceased at the sight of them.

The American consul was found wrapped in a US flag and hiding under the floorboards of

his office, and it was during this period that Butler received a colourful nickname. Already known for a glaring stare, he was apparently suffering from an illness that made his eyes more bloodshot than usual. His Marines gave him the moniker of 'Old Gimlet Eye'.

Butler then served in Nicaragua, and although ill he participated in skirmishes while commanding a Marine battalion. At the same time his distrust of government intentions continued to grow. In 1914, the US and Mexico were edging towards war, and Butler conducted a covert assessment of Mexican preparedness, snooping across the capital of Mexico City. Marines were ordered to intercept the delivery of a large quantity of munitions at Veracruz, and sporadic fighting erupted in the streets. As nearly 6,000 Marines had come ashore in Mexico, the conflict intensified.

On 22 April 1914, Butler distinguished himself during the occupation of Veracruz and was recommended for the Medal of Honor, which was awarded on 4 December 1915. The citation read in part "Major Butler was eminent and conspicuous in command of his battalion. He exhibited courage and skill in leading his



Above: Butler leads a parade of US Marines through the historic town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

men through the action of the 22nd and in the final occupation of the city.”

The next year, Butler and a contingent of Marines were dispatched to Haiti aboard the battleship USS Connecticut. The Haitian president had been killed during a riot, and shortly after the Americans landed in late October they were ambushed by a force of Haitian rebels (known as cacos) nearly ten times their number. The 44 Marines held their line during a restless night and threw the rebels back in disorder the next morning. By late November numerous fortifications and strongpoints had been taken, but Fort Riviere, an old French post, had to be stormed.

Butler led 700 Marines in capturing the fort on 17 November 1915. After discovering a small opening in the fort’s southern wall and slipping inside along with his men, a brutal hand-to-hand fight against the rebels ensued. Brutal but brief; within 20 minutes Fort Riviere was in the hands of the Marines. Fortunately for Butler and his men only one American had been injured in the skirmish (by a thrown rock) while 50 Haitians lay dead.

Franklin D Roosevelt, assistant secretary of the US Navy and future president of the United States, recommended Butler for the Medal of Honor, the citation reading “Major Butler gave the signal to attack and Marines from the 15th Company poured through the breach, engaged the cacos, took the bastion, and crushed the cacos resistance”.

To his dismay, Butler was not recommended for combat command when the US entered the First World War. He was promoted to brigadier general and given charge of Camp Pontanezen, a troop depot at the port of Brest, France. He attempted to return his Medal of Honor presented for Veracruz with the bold statement that he had done nothing worthy of it. However, he was instructed to keep the medal. In France, Butler discharged his duties



Above: Butler’s car passes through the entrance at Camp Pontanezen near Brest, France, during the First World War

“I SPENT MOST OF MY TIME BEING A HIGH-CLASS MUSCLE MAN FOR BIG BUSINESS, FOR WALL STREET AND FOR THE BANKERS. IN SHORT, I WAS A RACKETEER FOR CAPITALISM”

Major General Smedley Butler

capably, but his convictions regarding the nature of modern war became entrenched. Later, he took command of the Marine Corps base at Quantico, Virginia, and was commended for his administrative skill.

In the mid-1920s, Butler took a leave of absence from the Marine Corps at the request of W Freeland Kendrick, mayor of Philadelphia, and became the city’s director of public safety. He waged a campaign of suppression against crime in the city and strictly enforced Prohibition laws. However, by the time his tenure concluded in 1926 he had raised the ire of the mayor and other officials. Although he had accomplished his task to a great extent, his direct style and fiery independence had resulted in great acrimony.

Butler was promoted to major general but passed over for the prestigious post of Marine Corps commandant. Partially to blame were his highly publicised rancour with Philadelphia’s local government and his public recounting of ‘gossip’ regarding Italian dictator Benito Mussolini. When he told the story that Mussolini had committed

a hit-and-run with his automobile and a child had been killed, Butler was actually arrested and subjected to court martial. That episode ended with only a reprimand.

In 1934, Butler publicly claimed that he had been approached by a group of conspirators to seize power in a coup d’etat, overthrowing President Roosevelt. Some of his testimony before a Congressional inquiry related to the ‘Business Plot’ was validated, but the actual existence of the conspiracy was never proven.

Even as these events unfolded, Butler’s belief that warfare was an instrument of government collusion to further the interests of big business never wavered. He became more vocal as the years progressed, lecturing on the anti-war perspective and supporting leftist political endeavours. In 1935, he wrote a short treatise titled *War Is A Racket* and decreed that its “profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives”. He also commented: “I served in all commissioned ranks from second lieutenant to major general. And during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for big business, for Wall Street and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism. I suspected I was just part of the racket all the time. Now I am sure of it.”

For his stance on warfare, Major General Smedley Butler received both praise and scorn. Continuing to argue against armed conflict, he returned to his native Pennsylvania after retiring from the Marine Corps. He subsequently fell ill and died, most likely of cancer, at age 58 on 21 June 1940.

At the time of his death Butler was perhaps the most controversial figure to wear an American military uniform. He was also the most highly decorated Marine of his era. He is rightly remembered for his daring on the battlefield and for his firmly held opinions regarding the military-industrial complex off it.

F-16

FIGHTING FALCON

Arguably the world's most successful jet fighter, the Fighting Falcon has served in nations around the world, in conflicts spanning decades

WORDS STUART HADAWAY



The F-16 was adopted by the USAF display team the Thunderbirds in 1983



GAPING AIR INTAKE

A distinctive feature is the unsightly and seemingly ungainly air intake under the cockpit. It is set far enough back to reduce drag and minimise air-flow loss. A splitter plate is used to control air flow.

“THE F-16 WOULD LATER BE DEVELOPED INTO A HIGHLY CAPABLE ALL-WEATHER MULTI-ROLE AIRCRAFT”

The General Dynamics (later Lockheed, then Lockheed Martin) F-16 Fighting Falcon is widely regarded as the world's most successful jet fighter. Originally designed in the early 1970s to meet a US requirement for a low-cost, low-weight fighter, it came after decades of building heavy fighters designed primarily as interceptors or strike attack aircraft. Experience in the Vietnam War convinced the military of the need for a pure-bred dogfighter – lean, light and agile. Ironically, from its inception as a day fighter, the F-16 would later be developed into a highly capable all-weather multi-role aircraft with a formidable ground-attack ability.

Even as the US Air Force (USAF) was announcing the adoption of the F-16 in 1975, a European group including Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway also declared their intention to purchase it. It would be the start of a prodigious overseas career for the aircraft. During its history, around 25 other countries would operate the F-16 (and several more have considered ordering the type), and the aircraft would be licence-built in several of those countries. Both Israel and Pakistan would use the type in combat before the US did, and, with over 4,500 built, it continues to be one of the most numerous and widely used fighters in the world.

GENERAL DYNAMICS F-16 FIGHTING FALCON

COMMISSIONED	1972
ORIGIN	USA
LENGTH	49FT 5IN (15.06M)
WINGSPAN	32FT 8IN (9.96M)
ENGINE	1 X GENERAL ELECTRIC F110-GE-129 OR PRATT & WHITNEY F100-PW-229 AFTERBURNING TURBOFAN
CREW	1
PRIMARY WEAPON	UP TO 16,975LB (7,700KG) OF AIR-TO- AIR MISSILES, BOMBS OR ROCKETS
SECONDARY WEAPON	M61A1 VULCAN ROTARY CANNON



VARIABLE-CAMBER WINGS

Flaperons along the leading and trailing edges of the wings are automatically controlled by the on-board computer, varying the camber of the wings to maximise performance.



CLOSE-SET UNDERCARRIAGE

The F-16 has a close-set and surprisingly simple tricycle undercarriage. In order to keep the wing thin, it folds into the lower fuselage.



FULLY MOVING STABILISERS

After some early stability issues, the F-16 was fitted with larger and fully moving horizontal stabilisers, improving performance at high angles of attack, assisting with stall recovery and aiding faster take-offs.

Left: A Turkish Air Force F-16 demonstrates its self-defence suite

ARMAMENT

The F-16 has a 20mm M61A1 Vulcan six-barrelled cannon in the fuselage to the left of the cockpit, and also carries a fearsome array of other weaponry. Initially designed to carry two AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, one on each wing tip, continuous developments have seen the number of hard-points rise to 11, of which nine can carry ordnance (the others carrying sensors and other systems) or external fuel tanks. Up to 16,975lb (7,700kg) of air-to-air or air-to-ground missiles, iron and smart bombs, or rockets can be carried to meet almost any mission requirement.

Below: US Air Force Major Todd Pierce, a pilot with the 451st Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, inspects the bombs and missiles on an F-16C Fighting Falcon, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, April 2012

Right: An F-16 drops two laser-guided bombs over a range



The F-16 has nine weapons pylons – one on each wing tip, three under each wing and one under the fuselage. The wing tip pylons are typically used for air-to-air missiles



DESIGN

With wing-body blending and a cropped delta wing swept back at 40°, the F-16 has a sleek look marred only by the gaping air intake under the nose. Light and strong, it can perform at up to 9G and exceed Mach 2, with its agility improved by 'relaxed static stability'. This essentially means that the aircraft is inherently unstable, with numerous adjustable sections around the wings and fuselage automatically trimming the aircraft in normal flight. Every aspect of the aircraft is designed with ease of access and maintenance in mind.

Right: The F-16 utilises a number of automatic, computer-controlled systems to maximise performance by physically changing the shape of the wings and control surfaces

ENGINE

The Falcon was originally fitted with the Pratt & Whitney F100-PW-200 afterburning turbofan, a development of the -100 that was built for the F-15 Eagle. Rated at 23,830lbf (106kN), the engine initially had reliability issues but subsequent developments of the -220 and -220E greatly improved it. Today, F-16s tend to have the General Electric F110-GE-12, rated at 29,388lbf (131.61kN) with afterburner, or the Pratt & Whitney F110-PW-229, rated at 29,160lbf (129.7kN) with afterburner.

Below: Engine change on an F-16; both engine and airframe are designed for ease of replacement



Above: Most parts of engine and avionics are easily accessible through exterior panels



The F-16's distinctive bubble canopy provides the pilot with excellent visibility



COCKPIT

One of the F-16's most distinctive features is the high bubble canopy. Frameless and reinforced to protect against bird strikes, the bulging sides combined with very high-set seat provide a 360° view, with a remarkable 40° down-view. The pilot's ejector seat is also set at a 30° angle, helping them cope with high-G manoeuvres. Primary flight controls are similarly adapted, with a side-mounted control column on the right and throttles on the left, both fitted with numerous other controls which the pilot might otherwise struggle to reach while under high-G.



Above: Interior of an F-16 cockpit, with the side-mounted control column allowing easier control under high-G



Two USAF F-16s on patrol over Iraq, 2020

SERVICE HISTORY

Entering service with the USAF in 1978, the F-16 quickly spread around the world. It was used by the USAF over Iraq from 1991 onwards, and with the USAF and various European forces over the Balkans, Afghanistan and Libya. The type has also seen combat over the Pakistan-India border, Israel's borders, over Syria with the Turkish Air Force, and over the Sinai with the Egyptians, as well over Yemen with the Moroccan and Bahraini air forces. Easy to maintain, highly capable and now fully adapted for strike operations, the F-16 has proven an extremely popular and cost-effective force-multiplier for many nations.

The F-16 remains in production even after 50 years, and several Eastern European countries have either ordered or stated an intent to order them to replace their slightly younger Mikoyan MiG-29s. Ukraine is one of those countries, with the support of Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium to train their pilots.



Above: An Israeli F-16 takes off for a patrol over the Negev Desert, 2008

“EASY TO MAINTAIN, HIGHLY CAPABLE AND NOW FULLY ADAPTED FOR STRIKE OPERATIONS, THE F-16 HAS PROVEN AN EXTREMELY POPULAR AND COST-EFFECTIVE FORCE-MULTIPLIER FOR MANY NATIONS”

Below: Royal Danish Air Force F-16 in low-level flight over California's Mojave Desert



Below: An F-16 Fighting Falcon receives fuel from a KC-135 Stratotanker



HITLER'S DREAM OF POWER REQUIRED LOYAL COMMANDERS AND KILLER MACHINES

If Hitler's fantasy of a Germanic empire was to be realised he would need to rely on the courage and competence of military leaders and highly trained units and their cutting-edge equipment. Discover the troops and tools that made Nazi Germany such a formidable foe.



Ordering is easy. Go online at:

magazinesdirect.com

Or get it from selected supermarkets & newsagents

HOME FRONT



70 WWII THIS MONTH

On 28 November, the 'Big Three', Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt, met to discuss the progress of the war and the forthcoming invasion of France

64

Museums and events



72

This month's military history book reviews



78

Q&A:
Andy McNab



Follow History of War:



FACEBOOK
/HistoryofWarMag



TWITTER
@HistoryofWarMag

MUSEUMS & EVENTS

Discover a new war comics exhibition, a series of Korean War veteran portraits, and upcoming events at the Canadian War Museum

An exploration of British war comics

A story spanning over 130 years, a new exhibition at the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum looks at British comics and how they have interpreted conflict

Opened in 2014, the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum – located in Woodstock – charts the county's war experience at home and overseas. Now, a recently installed exhibition entitled *Into Battle: The Art of British War Comics* explores that experience in print.

Immensely popular today, comics have been published in Britain for over 130 years. Conflict has been a common theme since the earliest days, especially in the 1960s and 1970s when war stories became a hugely sought-after genre.

The museum's latest exhibition – which runs until 30 April 2024 – features original comic artwork on public display for the very first time.

Highlighting the medium's development decade by decade, *Into Battle* begins with the likes of satirical comic strips and patriotic illustrated story papers that were prevalent through the 19th and early 20th centuries. It then delves deep into the revolutionary comics of later years, which presented grittier, more authentic and more emotionally charged tales.

The exhibition has been created in collaboration with Rebellion Publishing and its extensive archives, drawing on visually striking comic book front covers and action-packed panels from the *War Picture Library*, *Battle Picture Weekly* and *Battle Action*.

The latter title is considered one of the greatest conflict-centred comics ever published and was recently revived by the Oxford-based publishing house. It boasts a series called *Charley's War* by Pat Mills and Jo Colquhoun, which follows its main character from underage recruit in 1914 through numerous major events of the Great War. The strip sees Charley lose his friends in battle, portraying the human cost of combat as witnessed by an ordinary soldier.

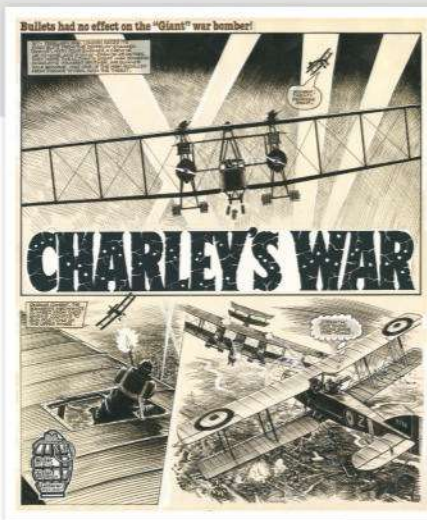
With much to capture the interest and imagination of adults, *Into Battle* also offers the museum's younger visitors the chance to discover how comics are made and try creating comics themselves.

It has been sponsored by Ridge, an organisation of multidisciplinary property and construction consultants. Partner Mark Richards said of the Soldiers of Oxfordshire

Charley's War touches on the human cost of WWI

Museum display: "Ridge is delighted to support the local community near its Oxford office with a new exhibition showcasing the best British war comics. Supporting this exhibition on British war comics celebrates the rich history and honours the bravery and sacrifices of soldiers while promoting cultural engagement and education in our community. This exhibition will showcase the best of British war comics, providing a platform to appreciate the storytelling, artwork and historical significance they offer, which Ridge is proud to be a part of."

For more information visit: sofo.org.uk



Original artwork from the 1960s' *Bulldog Breed* by Jordi Penalva



Pegasus Bridge from *Battle Picture Weekly* No 2 (1975)



1961's *Debt of Honour* by Alessandro Biffignandi

Imjin River veterans immortalised on canvas

Commemorating the Battle of Imjin River, the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum has unveiled portraits dedicated to nine Korean War servicemen

Situated in Gloucester's Historic Docks, the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum is a hub for the county's military contributions and the memory of those who served. Yet as the number of Korean War veterans dwindles – not least survivors of the infamous Battle of Imjin River – it is hoped that a newly unveiled project will further assist in keeping those memories alive.

Nine Imjin River veterans – most of whom belonged to the Gloucestershire Regiment that played a heroic role in the April 1951 battle – have had their likenesses captured on canvas after a years-long campaign. The series of portraits, created by artist and ex-England wicketkeeper Jack Russell, are now on display for visitors to admire.

Museum Director Matthew Holden tells *History of War*: "With 59 men killed and a further 522 becoming prisoners of war, the Battle of Imjin River still represents this nation's biggest post-Second World War engagement. Korea is largely referred to as the 'forgotten war' due to a lack of interest... It is time these men were given their due respect and the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum has the only Korean War-dedicated gallery in Europe. The exhibition by renowned artist Jack Russell will help to further our goal of educating people about the heroics performed, and horrors encountered, by these men. The survivors, of which just eight now remain, will be forever immortalised in Jack's portraits."



Image: Jack Russell / Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum

The portrait of Imjin River survivor Harry Hawkesworth

For more information visit: soldiersofglos.com

Canadian War Museum's packed programme

Hosting an array of new exhibitions and events to captivate visitors, the Canadian War Museum has a full season planned through late 2023 and beyond

Located in Canada's capital city of Ottawa, Ontario, the Canadian War Museum (CWM) is the nation's leading military history institution. The site comprises a collection of more than three million artefacts, specimens, artworks, written documents and recordings. It is also world-renowned for its groundbreaking temporary exhibitions and events.

Most recently, a newly opened display called War Games, running until the end of the year, sheds new light on the interconnected histories between conflict and the popular medium. Spanning millennia, the five chronological zones guide visitors through the earliest known examples of war gaming to the more recognisable versions of modern times. Featured artefacts include a 2,500-year-old decorated amphora (a ceramic vessel) depicting Trojan War heroes Achilles and Ajax playing a game. Other more modern 'artefacts' include a British officer board game of the 1880s, and 2010's video game *Medal of Honor* – representing the timelessness of war games.



The Canadian War Museum has been situated at its present site since 2005

The museum will likewise host the winning entries from the Legion National Foundation's Annual Poster and Literary Contest. This yearly competition invites Canadian youth to honour veterans by creating and submitting visual art, writing and video.

Finally, ticketholders can immerse themselves in the Canadian Forces Artists Program – Group 9 exhibition running until 17 March 2024. Unveiling the work of four civilian artists who were deployed with Canadian forces during 2018 and 2019, the pieces reveal a unique perspective of Canada's military at home and abroad. These displays – alongside other events and the museum's permanent holdings – can be viewed with a general admission ticket.



War Games (pictured) opens with a note that war is not a game. The underlying theme is instead that warfare, play and games have long shared interconnected histories

For more information visit: warmuseum.ca

Images: Canadian War Museum

CONVOY HG-76

Q&A: ANGUS KONSTAM

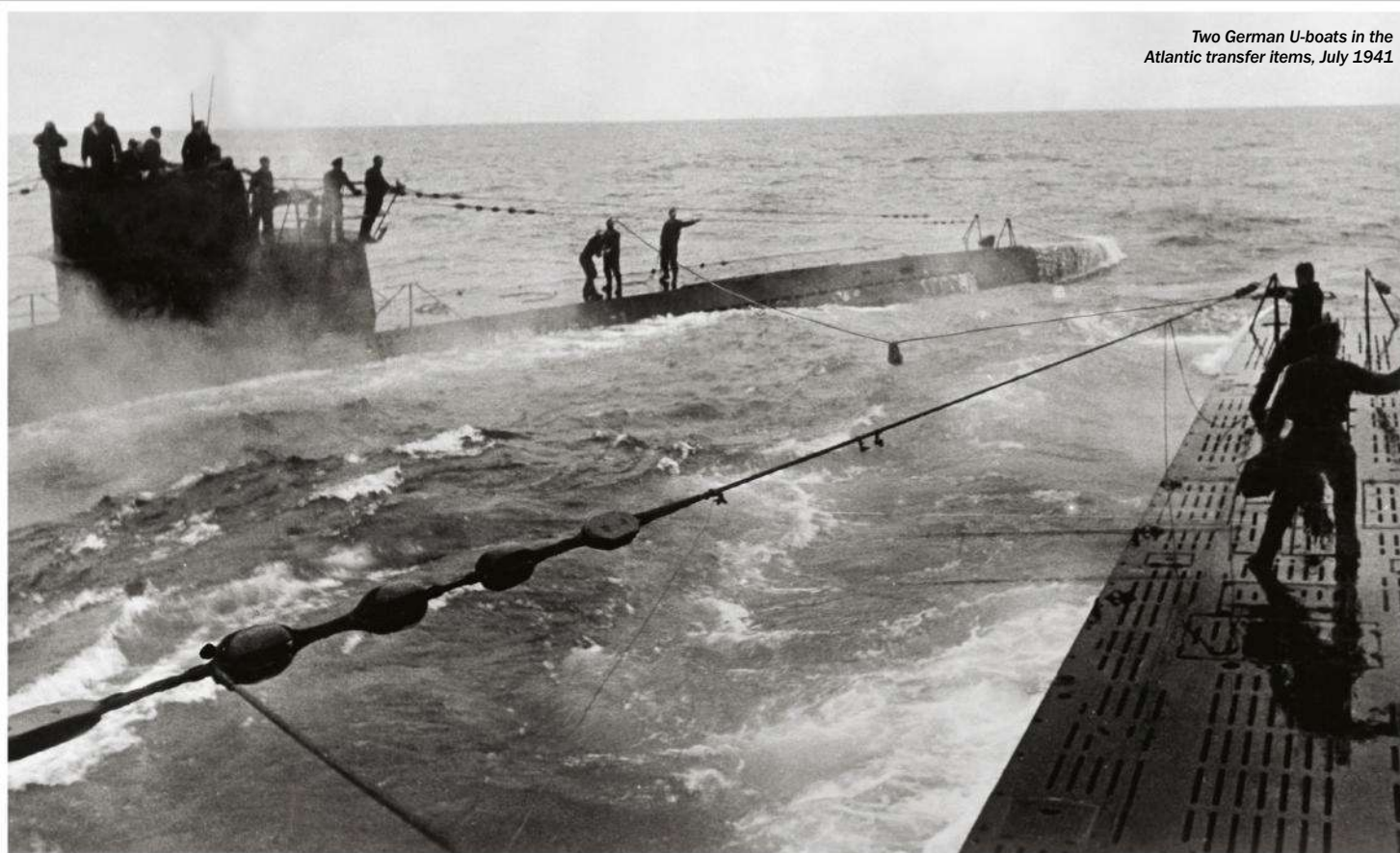
Award-winning Orkney historian Angus Konstam discusses his latest book, retelling the story of convoy HG-76 and its dramatic defence against U-boats in 1941

WORDS LARRY PATERSON & LOUIS HARDIMAN

A destroyer in the Atlantic drops depth charges after a U-boat is detected nearby, May 1941



Two German U-boats in the Atlantic transfer items, July 1941



Angus Konstam's latest book *The Convoy* tells the story of the merchant ship convoy HG-76, which in December 1941 faced a 2,000-mile (3,220km) journey across the Atlantic, shadowed by U-boats.

The story is told in the context of continued Allied failure in the tonnage war, losing ships to German U-boats faster than they could be replaced. However, HG-76 was different thanks to the presence of anti-submarine expert Commander Frederic 'Johnnie' Walker and an invaluable air force of four fighters.

Konstam draws on reports and accounts from within the convoy and the U-boats that continually harassed it. He tells the story of the technical and tactical developments that turned the tide in the Atlantic and the stoic determination of those onboard the convoy.

Konstam spoke to *History of War* about his book, reflecting on the factors leading to the success of HG-76 and the significance of the U-boat in the Second World War.

Do you feel that the decision to concentrate German U-boat strength against the Gibraltar convoy route rather than within the North Atlantic was misguided?

I'm fairly sure it was. It's always easy to look at these things with the benefit of hindsight. Still, Vizeadmiral Karl Dönitz certainly thought it was a mistake. In late 1941, Hitler ordered him to divert his U-boats from the campaign being waged against transatlantic convoys and instead redeploy the boats to attack the convoys running between Gibraltar and Britain. The motive was political: to support Mussolini at a time when Italy was hard-pressed in the

Mediterranean. Dönitz, the Kriegsmarine's 'Commander of U-boats', wasn't happy with the order and told Hitler as much. For him, it diverted his boats away from what he saw as the key battle: the tonnage war being waged in the mid-Atlantic.

At the time, Germany was winning that struggle and Britain was fast running out of merchant ships. So diverting boats away from this fight was arguably a major strategic

blunder. Still, the Gibraltar convoys were also of crucial importance. If Hitler and Dönitz succeeded in cutting that vital sea route, then the bitterly fought campaigns in the Mediterranean and North Africa might have taken a very different course. Wherever Dönitz sent his U-boats, a lot was riding on their effectiveness.

How important was the addition of HMS Audacity to the defence of HG-76?

What made the battle for Convoy HG-76 so crucially important in the fight against the U-boats were the two innovations that made it stand out from all previous convoys. The first was the escort commander, whose aggressive tactics meant the Germans would have a tough fight on their hands. The second was Audacity. It was the Royal Navy's prototype of a new kind of warship: the escort carrier. Aircraft were one of the best means of detecting U-boats on the surface, or of driving off shadowing reconnaissance planes. However, once a convoy passed out of range of friendly land-based air cover it was left without any air support.

The escort carrier was a way to bridge that gap. Audacity, a former German-built merchant ship, was the solution. Its four Martlet fighters proved invaluable at detecting U-boats so the escorts could then hunt them down. They could also shoot down shadowing German aircraft to stop them guiding U-boats across the convoy's path. Audacity mightn't have survived the convoy battle for HG-76 but it certainly proved its worth. Thanks to Audacity, the escort carrier would go on to play a key part in winning the Battle of the Atlantic.



Above: Karl Dönitz thought Hitler's order to attack convoys between Gibraltar and Britain was a mistake

How innovative were Commander Walker's anti-submarine warfare ideas to existing Royal Navy training? Did his input alter techniques within the service?

During the decade before the outbreak of war, Walker had become one of the Royal Navy's most gifted anti-submarine experts. He'd also developed his own ideas about how U-boats could be fought and how convoys should be defended. But these didn't chime with the official tactics laid down by the Admiralty. In 1941, though, Walker was given command of an escort group; a collection of small anti-submarine warships used as convoy escorts. Now he could finally put his ideas into practice. For Walker, the passive defence of a convoy wasn't enough. He wasn't happy with just driving off enemy U-boats, he wanted to destroy them.

He developed aggressive new tactics which featured teamwork, with escorts coordinating their efforts so one would keep the U-boat in contact using sonar (or Asdic as the British called it) while others would attack and sink the U-boat. He first got his chance to show what he could do when he was named escort commander for HG-76. Walker's tally of five U-boats destroyed was the perfect demonstration of the effectiveness of his methods. After that, the Admiralty finally listened and Walker's tactics soon became standard practice within the Royal Navy.

How integral to the defence of HG-76 were ULTRA decrypts? Or RF/DF intelligence?

One of the key Allied weapons in the Battle of the Atlantic was intelligence-gathering. Much has been made of Operation Ultra – the Allied ability to read German military signals after their Enigma codes were broken. This certainly provided vital intelligence and helped warn

the Admiralty that Gibraltar Convoy HG-76 was going to be subjected to a concerted attack by a whole wolfpack of German U-boats. As the running convoy battle progressed, though, the Admiralty also made good use of RF/DF intelligence sources – the interception of German radio signals, which helped to pinpoint the location of U-boats operating along the convoy's path.

More than once during the HG-76 fight this helped warn the convoy commander that the wolfpack was lying in wait for him. So under cover of darkness he altered course and managed to sidestep the U-boats. However, this wasn't the reason HG-76 was such an important convoy battle. That was all down to the success of the pilots of Audacity's little fighters to spot these U-boats on the surface, and the ability of Walker and his escorts to then hunt them down.

After his successful tenure as commander of U46 why do you think Engelbert Endrass was relatively unsuccessful as commander of U567 and how certain are the details of his sinking?

In mid-October 1939, Endrass participated in one of the most daring U-boat operations of the war – the sinking of the battleship Royal Oak in Scapa Flow by U-47. Afterwards, Endrass went on to command U-47 himself, and in a little

over a year he sank over 130,000 tons of Allied shipping. He was on track to being one of the top U-boat aces of the war. Then, in October 1941, Endrass was given command of U-567, based in St Nazaire. But on his first patrol, a month-long sortie into the Atlantic, he didn't sink a single ship.

He was still a real hero in the service, though, so when Endrass was sent to reinforce the wolfpack attacking HG-76, Dönitz sent the wolfpack's boats the morale-boosting message "Endrass is Coming!" By then, though, Endrass was suffering badly from stress and combat fatigue. He should have been given a command ashore, like many others of his experience. Instead, he was sent out to attack the convoy and never returned. Although the sinking of U-567 was never officially verified, it was almost certainly sunk by depth charges late on 21 December and went down with all hands.

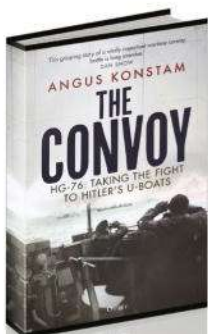
Were German U-boats as effective during the Second World War as is commonly portrayed?

The German U-boat was an extremely potent weapon of war. You just need to look at the tally of Allied merchant ships these boats sunk to verify its effectiveness. However, the Type VII U-boat which made up the bulk of the Kriegsmarine's U-boat fleet had its limitations. Essentially, they were designed to operate on the surface. They could make up to 17 knots, which meant they could stalk a convoy, then attack it under cover of darkness. Once submerged, though, these only made 7 knots. This meant that to successfully attack a convoy the boat had to remain on the surface until it was in a perfect firing position.

This was a major weakness. During 1941, improvements in radar meant that U-boats could be detected on the surface, and darkness couldn't hide them. Improvements

"WALKER'S TALLY OF FIVE U-BOATS DESTROYED WAS THE PERFECT DEMONSTRATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HIS METHODS"

ANGUS KONSTAM'S LATEST BOOK THE CONVOY HG-76: TAKING THE FIGHT TO HITLER'S U-BOATS IS AVAILABLE NOW FROM OSPREY PUBLISHING





to Asdic – or sonar – meant that they could be detected with some accuracy underwater, and if the escorts actively hunted them the slow speed of a U-boat meant it was hard-pressed to escape. This made the U-boats especially vulnerable if they faced a particularly aggressive escort commander such as Walker. Then the hunter could very quickly become the hunted.

How important were Luftwaffe KG40 Condor aircraft to the course of this battle?

Today, most wine lovers arriving at Bordeaux airport have no idea that the place played a key role in the Battle of the Atlantic. It was here at Bordeaux-Mérignac that the Luftwaffe based

many of its Focke-Wulf FW-200 Condors. These huge four-engined maritime patrol aircraft could range almost 2,000 miles (3,220km) out into the Atlantic, and could remain in the air for up to 14 hours. Although their main role was as long-range search aircraft, they could also be highly effective as bombers. On the 'Gibraltar Run', between Britain and Gibraltar, the convoys passed within easy reach of the Condors of Kampfgeschwader 40 (KG-40), an air group of three squadrons based at Bordeaux-Mérignac.

Once they had located a convoy, these Condors could shadow it for hours, reporting its position so that U-boats could intercept it. There was nothing the Allies could do

Above: Aggressive new tactics involving greater coordination between ships countered the U-boat threat to the vital transatlantic shipping routes

Above, left: Louis Mountbatten, Captain of the 5th Destroyer Flotilla, pictured on board HMS Kelly

Below: Improvements to radar and sonar technology helped the Allied convoys detect enemy submarines, whose slow speed left them vulnerable

about these Condors – until the arrival of Audacity. During the HG-76 convoy battle, Martlet fighters from the tiny carrier shot down two Condors and drove others off so that they couldn't act as a homing beacon for U-boats. Once the escort carrier appeared on the scene, the days of the Condor were numbered.

Images: Getty




WWII THIS MONTH...

NOVEMBER 1943

To commemorate 80 years since the Second World War, History of War will be taking a look at some of the key events taking place during each month of the conflict



The Red Army's success in Kyiv had been made possible by first battling to establish bridgeheads over the Dnieper River (pictured)

SOVIET FORCES CLAIM KIEV

Kyiv (or Kiev) had been in Nazi hands since 19 September 1941, a battle that had cost the USSR some 450,000 casualties, in addition to the murder of 34,000 Jews in the Babi Yar ravine. With Russia's shifting fortunes, however, the three-year reign of terror was on the cusp of ending from 3 November 1943, when Soviet troops – now on the offensive – kick-started the Second Battle of Kiev. Stalin had hoped for a symbolic victory on 7 November, coinciding with the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. His fervent dream was realised one day early, on 6 November, with the city's effective liberation.





A MONTH OF CONFERENCES

In mid-November 1943, US President Franklin D Roosevelt boarded the USS Iowa en route to the first of two key conferences that month. The journey itself was eventful enough when American destroyer USS William D Porter inadvertently fired an armed torpedo at the commander-in-chief's battleship, luckily missing Iowa. Roosevelt then travelled to Cairo, Egypt, where he met British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Nationalist Chinese President Chiang Kai-shek. From 22-26 November, the leaders discussed the war against Japan and the future of Asia. A second conference was held in Tehran, Iran, from 28 November to 1 December. Attended by the so-called 'Big Three' – Roosevelt, Churchill and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin – discussions outlined several strategically significant decisions, including the planned opening of the second front through Operation Overlord.

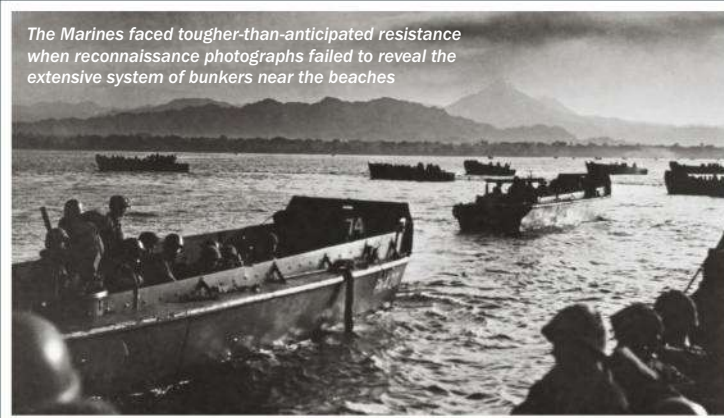
The Cairo Conference, codenamed 'Sextant', and the Tehran Conference (pictured), codenamed 'Eureka', helped facilitate a series of important Allied decisions



THE BOUGAINVILLE CAMPAIGN

On 1 November 1943, US 3rd Marine Division landed on the Japanese-held Pacific Island of Bougainville. A part of the larger Solomon Islands campaign that had begun a year earlier, the objective was to isolate Japan's air and naval base at Rabaul on New Britain. What followed were months of fierce enemy resistance, not least on D-Day itself when the 14,321-strong amphibious assault force encountered numerous obstacles while establishing a beachhead. A naval engagement known as the Battle of Empress Augusta Bay also broke out that evening after American ships intercepted a large Japanese flotilla bound for Bougainville. US and later Australian efforts to neutralise the island lasted until the end of the war.

The Marines faced tougher-than-anticipated resistance when reconnaissance photographs failed to reveal the extensive system of bunkers near the beaches



JET AGE SHOOTS FOR THE STARS

Beginning in June 1943, American aircraft manufacturer Lockheed executed plans to create the United States' first operational jet fighter: the P-80 Shooting Star. With a strict deadline to design and build a prototype within 150 days, the feat was achieved on 13 November, a week ahead of schedule. The momentous success – intended to counter the imposing threat of the Germans' jet-powered Messerschmitt Me 262 – nevertheless came too late for combat readiness. It was not until the Korean War that the P-80's full potential was realised.

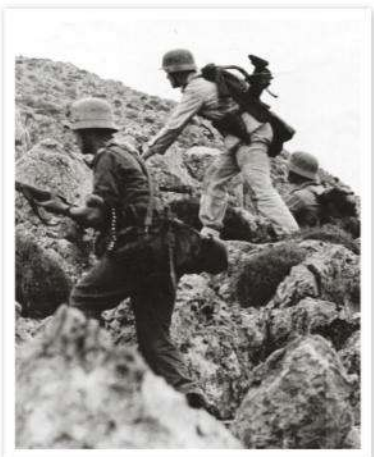
Lockheed created a prototype of the P-80 Shooting Star within a mere 143 days, but the jet fighter would not participate in combat until the Korean War



ANGLO-ITALIAN CAPITULATION ON LEROS

Leros, a part of the Dodecanese Islands, became the scene of a ferocious battle between its Anglo-Italian defenders – the latter garrison having recently changed sides – and a German assault force from 12 November 1943. The invasion consisted of an amphibious landing and paratrooper airdrop, which succeeded in splitting the island in two to hinder Allied resistance efforts. By the 16th, the British and Italians had surrendered to the enemy, although the Germans had suffered significant casualties during the intense four-day struggle.

"THE GERMANS HAD SUFFERED SIGNIFICANT CASUALTIES DURING THE INTENSE FOUR-DAY STRUGGLE"



German troops in action during the invasion of Leros

REVIEWS

Our pick of the latest military history books and films

THE GREAT ESCAPER

IN 2014, CARE HOME RESIDENT AND WWII VETERAN BERNIE JORDAN ESCAPED TO FRANCE TO ATTEND THE D-DAY LANDINGS 70TH ANNIVERSARY – NOW HIS INCREDIBLE STORY HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO THE BIG SCREEN

Director: Oliver Parker **Starring:** Michael Caine, Glenda Jackson **Released:** Out now

Bernie Jordan, an 89-year-old D-Day veteran, became an international press sensation in the summer of 2014. Unable to book a place on an official D-Day veterans trip to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the largest seaborne invasion in history, he hotfooted it from his care home in Hove, East Sussex, and made his own way to Normandy.

What most surprises about Oliver Parker's *The Great Escaper* – the film's title comes from the hashtag Sussex Police

coined on social media – is its avoidance of sentimentality and decision to show (with some dramatic licence, of course) a truer picture of Bernie's so-called 'escape'. This isn't a light-hearted caper about a plucky old Brit absconding and avoiding the authorities while he completes his mission of remembrance. It's a poignant depiction of old age, mortality, love and facing the still-lingering horrors of warfare.

It is also beautifully performed by leads Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson (in her final role). The pair haven't appeared

together onscreen since 1975's *The Romantic Englishwoman*. In Joseph Losey's film, it's the wife (played by Jackson) who does a runner abroad (a detail likely to amuse movie buffs, given the story here). Casting is crucial and in *The Great Escaper* these two legends of British cinema help elevate tenfold what is, storytelling-wise, a slight tale on the face of it.

Caine and Jackson convince utterly as an elderly couple who have spent their lives devoted to each other. Jackson threatens to steal the show as the feisty but goodhearted



Rene (most of the film's funniest scenes and lines derive from her), while Caine lends Bernie a charm and twinkle in his eye that harks back to the actor's 1960s heyday as a cockney geezer about town. Caine especially has a great part; certainly one good enough to coax him out of retirement (the actor is now 90). He gets to do comedy and drama, and while Bernie's trip to France provides lots of humour, once he's over there he has to face old ghosts. He's haunted by his experiences on the beach, but equally guilt-ridden at having lived a full life while many of his fellow soldiers never came home.

William Ivory's script adds meaty depth and potent themes to the story of Bernie's 'escape' that actually wasn't as dramatic as the press made out at the time. In reality, Bernie didn't abscond from anywhere. He was allowed to come and go from the retirement home as he pleased and didn't require round-the-clock supervision. His celebrity was, as befits the era we live in, entirely the result of social media manufacturing a story out of his 'disappearance' and the nation reacting with the kind of corniness the film isn't interested in. Filmmaker Parker's skilful light-touch direction is saccharine-free and he ensures every emotional beat is earned and never cheap.

The Great Escaper, as Caine has said himself, doesn't glorify war and sacrifice. It glorifies the men and women of what became known as the Greatest Generation. This film pays heartfelt tribute to them. **MC**



NEXT WAR

REIMAGINING HOW WE FIGHT

WHAT'S THE FUTURE OF WARFARE AS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND REMOTE TECHNOLOGIES TRANSFORM THE BATTLE SPACE IN THE SECOND MACHINE AGE? AN EXPERT IN THE FIELD TACKLES THIS FASCINATING QUESTION

Author: John Antal **Publisher:** Casemate

Price: £22.50 (Paperback) **Released:** Out now

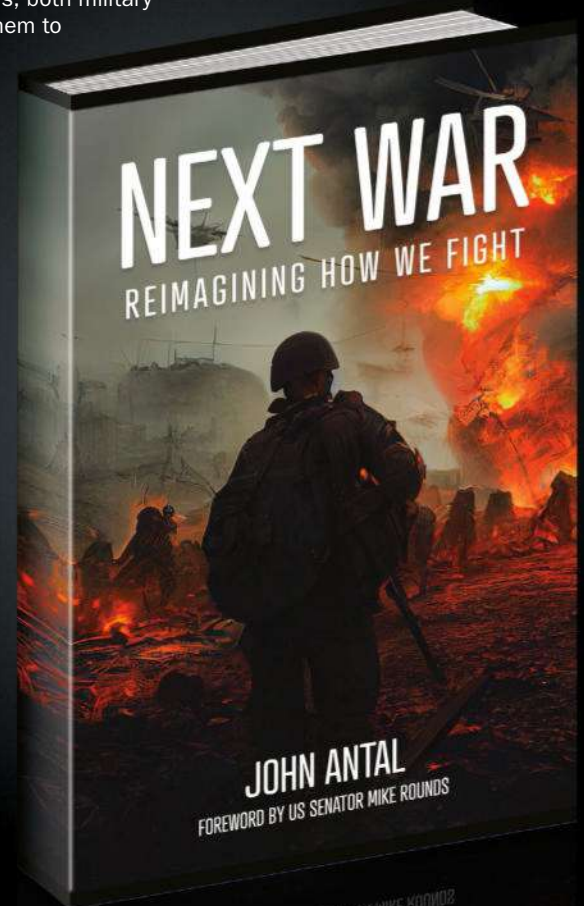
John Antal is that relatively rare beast: a former soldier with operational experience who also understands and embraces the radically changing future of war. *Next War* is a vivid portrait of how the gathering pace of technology – especially AI and remote, smart weaponry – has already changed the battlefield into the three-dimensional battle space, while explaining why this transformation has only just begun.

Military theory such as this can sometimes be dry and little more than a list of acronyms, but, thankfully, Antal manages to avoid the worst excesses of the genre by utilising two devices. First, he has picked three recent conflicts he insists should be thoroughly studied by today's leaders, both military and political, and uses them to highlight his most important themes. Second, he kicks off almost every chapter with a dramatised battle scenario to draw in the reader.

The three wars he has chosen – and why – are fascinating. The first is the Second Nagorno-Karabakh

War of 2020, which he describes as the “first [war] in history to be won by leveraging robotic systems”. The second is the 11-day 2021 Israel-Hamas campaign that witnessed an overwhelming Israeli victory in the “first artificial intelligence war”. The third is the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war where Vladimir Putin's expectation of a swift victory was derailed by a determined government and populace, aided by cutting-edge electronic systems such as Elon Musk's Starlink satellite system.

Throughout, Antal keeps coming back to the same question: “Are we ready for the next war?” His answer is simple: “Who thinks, wins.” **JT**



THE CHARLES ASGILL AFFAIR

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

A LARGELY FORGOTTEN EPISODE OF THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE IS BROUGHT INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

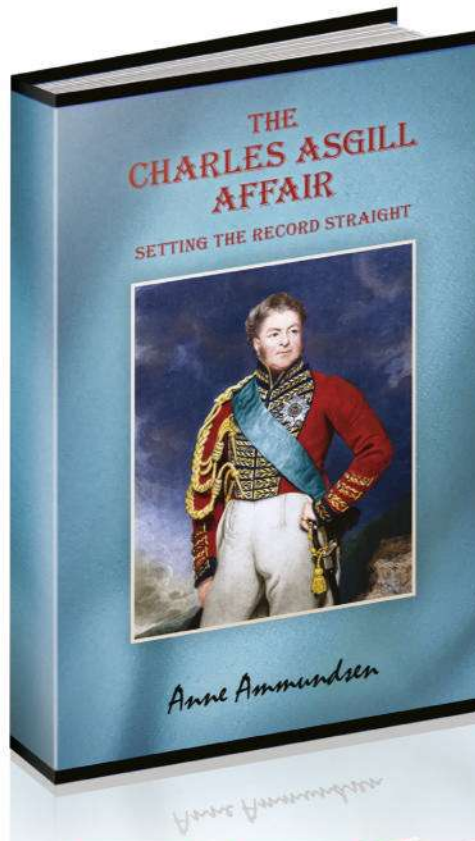
Author: Anne Ammundsen

Publisher: Heritage Books

Price: £25 (Hardback)

Released: Out now

The name Charles Asgill will be new to most readers of Anne Ammundsen's book, especially those in Britain, where his story has been forgotten. This is a shame – with roles for Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI, and a dashing young army officer centre stage, it is a story that could have been ripped from the pages of a novel.



Asgill had only been in America for four months when he was part of the British army that surrendered at Yorktown in 1781. A brief period of imprisonment, followed by a return to Britain on parole, was the fate of most officers who were part of Lord Cornwallis' defeated garrison, but Asgill was unfortunate. He was selected to stay behind to help oversee the enlisted men who would be staying in captivity until the war officially ended.

Asgill was then the victim of more misfortune when he was selected for execution in retaliation for the murder of an American officer. It was an illegal act, but one sanctioned (indeed, actively pushed for) by the American commander-in-chief, George Washington, despite an outpouring of dismay from both American and British observers.

Ammundsen (a descendant of Asgill's) has uncovered a fascinating story and tells it well. This book has clearly been a labour of love spanning two decades, and a large amount of background detail on Asgill's life has been uncovered, most important of which is an 18-page letter from Asgill himself, which helped the author refute the falsehoods in Washington's own account of the affair. **DS**

THE RESCUE

A DEADLY RACE AGAINST TIME FOR THE SAS AND NAVY SEALS TO SAVE HOSTAGES IN THE AFGHAN MOUNTAINS

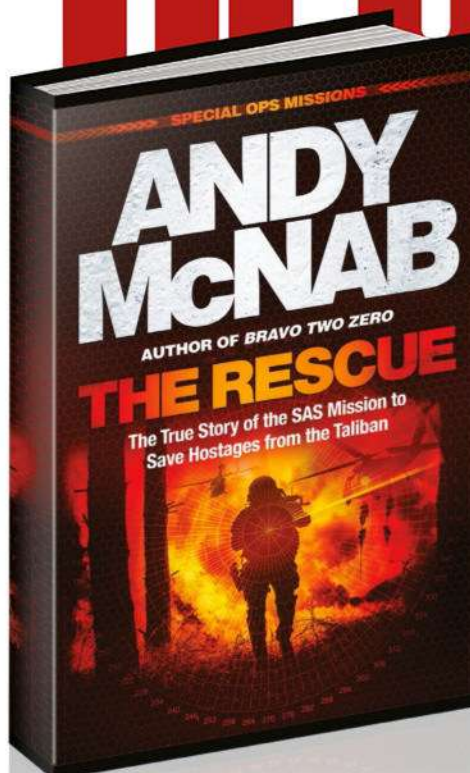
Author: Andy McNab

Publisher: Welbeck

Price: £20 (Hardback)

Released: 14 September

This is certainly a fast-paced and adrenalin-fuelled read. It makes it the sort of book you want to dash through in a single sitting for fear of missing out on the action. However, it would have been much better if the publisher had simply marketed it as 'inspired by true events' rather than a 'true story'. Instead, Welbeck has billed it as 'non-fiction'. Although undoubtedly drawing on true events and characters this is still essentially a novel. The author does include a disclaimer that individuals are renamed/



reimagined or made up to be representative of a type. Likewise the dialogue is clearly imagined for the purpose of dramatic effect. Nor are any open sources listed to underpin the story's veracity.

So this is not a history book but rather a flavour of history. That said, it is not a bad read. The mission features the British SAS and US SEALs desperately trying to rescue four female aid workers before they fall into the hands of the Taliban. The ending though perhaps predictable is nonetheless satisfying. McNab's expert eye for detail and tactics means that the narrative always feels wholly authentic, as does much of the down-to-earth dialogue. The background details are spot on as is the depiction of the grim political situation that faced the Coalition and the Afghans. There is certainly plenty of hardware and firepower on display and the storyline just cries out for a movie treatment. **ATJ**

THE FORGERS

THE FORGOTTEN STORY OF THE HOLOCAUST'S MOST AUDACIOUS RESCUE OPERATION

Author: Roger Moorhouse **Publisher:** The Bodley Head

Price: £25 (Hardback) **Released:** Out now

Between 1940 and 1943, a small group of Polish diplomats and Jewish activists in Switzerland engaged in a wholly remarkable and relatively unknown humanitarian operation. Under the leadership of the Polish Ambassador Aleksander Lados, the group covertly undertook a systematic programme of forging identity documents for Latin American countries, and these were then smuggled into German-occupied Europe to help save the lives of thousands of Jews facing extermination in the Holocaust. In effect, these documents were a passport to safety.

Every so often, a 'new' story relating to the Holocaust emerges and here Roger Moorhouse has uncovered, through scholarly research, something that is a gripping, inspirational and sometimes visceral account of a group of people who 'did the right thing' and who were not willing to stand idly by and do nothing to help those who were otherwise doomed to a terrible fate.

While those the Lados team helped were but a small fraction compared to those who perished at the hands of the Nazis, they demonstrated that where there was sufficient determination, guile and courage then there were ways and means by which the Jewish population of Europe could be helped. This revelation is especially heartbreaking when one sets the group's bravery and ingenuity against the shamefully wavering and feeble efforts – if they can even be called efforts – of the international community which wrung its hands but essentially did nothing at a time when so much more could have been done.

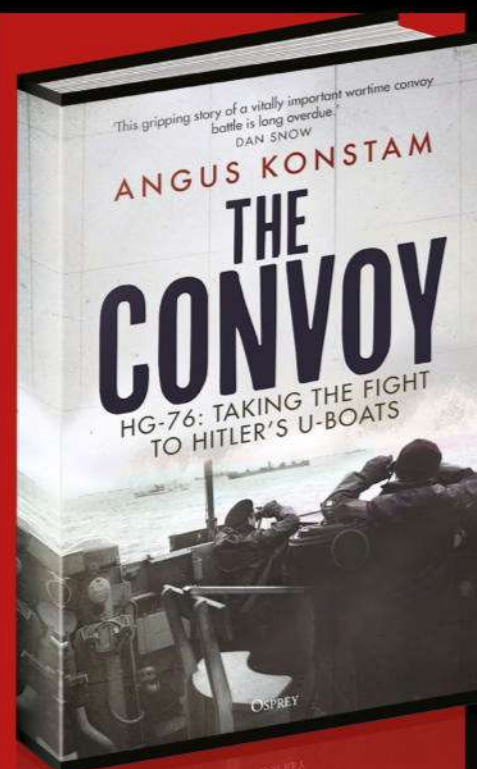
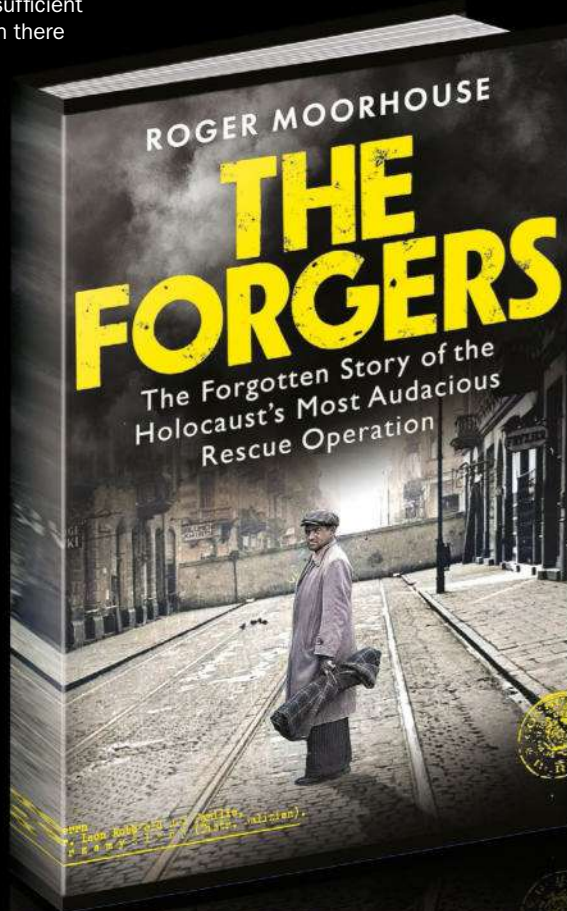
Ultimately, the Lados operation became one of the largest rescue missions of the war, and *The Forgers* tells this extraordinary story for the first time as it follows the desperate bids of Jews to obtain these potentially life-saving documents, and their awful and painful uncertainty over whether they would be granted protection from the Nazis' murderous and unrelenting fury.

Even though this is often a harrowing account, the author highlights the quiet and determined heroism of those who decided to act in what were courageous attempts to save

thousands of lives. At times, the book is breathtaking. And it is often powerfully visceral – but it carries the reader along in the manner that a gripping novel might succeed in doing. The revelations contained throughout, tied to personal and moving individual stories, are a real eye-opener which bring home so very forcefully the truly awful situation that the Jews of Europe were then facing. Without a doubt, those who worked with and for the Lados group were remarkable human beings at a time when human nature had often descended into untold levels of depravity.

To say that this book is brilliantly astonishing would not do the work anywhere near sufficient justice. However, in producing such an achingly moving study, Moorhouse has certainly done justice to the memory of the remarkable people on whom this book shines a long overdue spotlight.

Here is a truly gripping and absorbing account, falling into the 'absolutely must read' category of the harrowing Holocaust narrative. It comes very highly recommended by this reviewer. **AS**



THE CONVOY

AN EXTREMELY READABLE YET DETAILED ACCOUNT OF A PIVOTAL MOMENT IN BRITAIN'S WAR AGAINST GERMANY'S U-BOATS

Author: Angus Konstam

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

Price: £25 (Hardback)

Released: Out now

Angus Konstam does a fine job of conveying the sensation held by many in Britain's Admiralty during December 1941 that Karl Dönitz's U-boat campaign was winning the merchant war at sea. Contextualising the Gibraltar convoy route and its importance to Great Britain, he also explains the German rationale for devoting considerable forces to interdict this merchant traffic in southern Biscay despite the inherent risk of U-boat operations within this area.

He centres his story around the battle for Convoy HG-76, a milestone struggle not least because of the Royal Navy's inaugural deployment of escort carrier HMS Audacious. Konstam's account of the battle that enveloped HG-76 is superbly written. At no point does the considerable detail overpower the narrative flow and the reader gets a clear sense of events unfolding as the protracted struggle drew in elements of the Royal Navy and Merchant Navy, Royal Air Force, Kriegsmarine and Luftwaffe. Coupled with the chronological account, Konstam also includes much biographical detail, particularly of the formidable U-boat hunter Commander Frederic 'Johnnie' Walker. Highly recommended. **LP**

WIN A COPY OF

VICTORY TO DEFEAT

THE BRITISH ARMY 1918-40

Dr Robert Lyman and General Lord Richard Dannatt, former Chief of the General Staff, have co-authored a razor-sharp analysis of the British Army's decline in the so-called interwar years

5 BOOKS
TO BE
WON!



At the end of the First World War, the British Army was among the largest and most effective fighting forces in the world. So why, when war returned to Western Europe 20 years later, was it so catastrophically bested by a resurgent German military? This is the subject of the latest book from Dr Robert Lyman, who along with co-author Richard Dannatt give their verdict

on the decline of the British Army during these critical so-called interwar years.

This issue, *History of War* readers have the chance to win one of five copies of *Victory to Defeat*: simply visit historyanswers.co.uk or scan the QR code on the left for more details!

Victory to Defeat from Osprey Publishing is available now online and in stores.

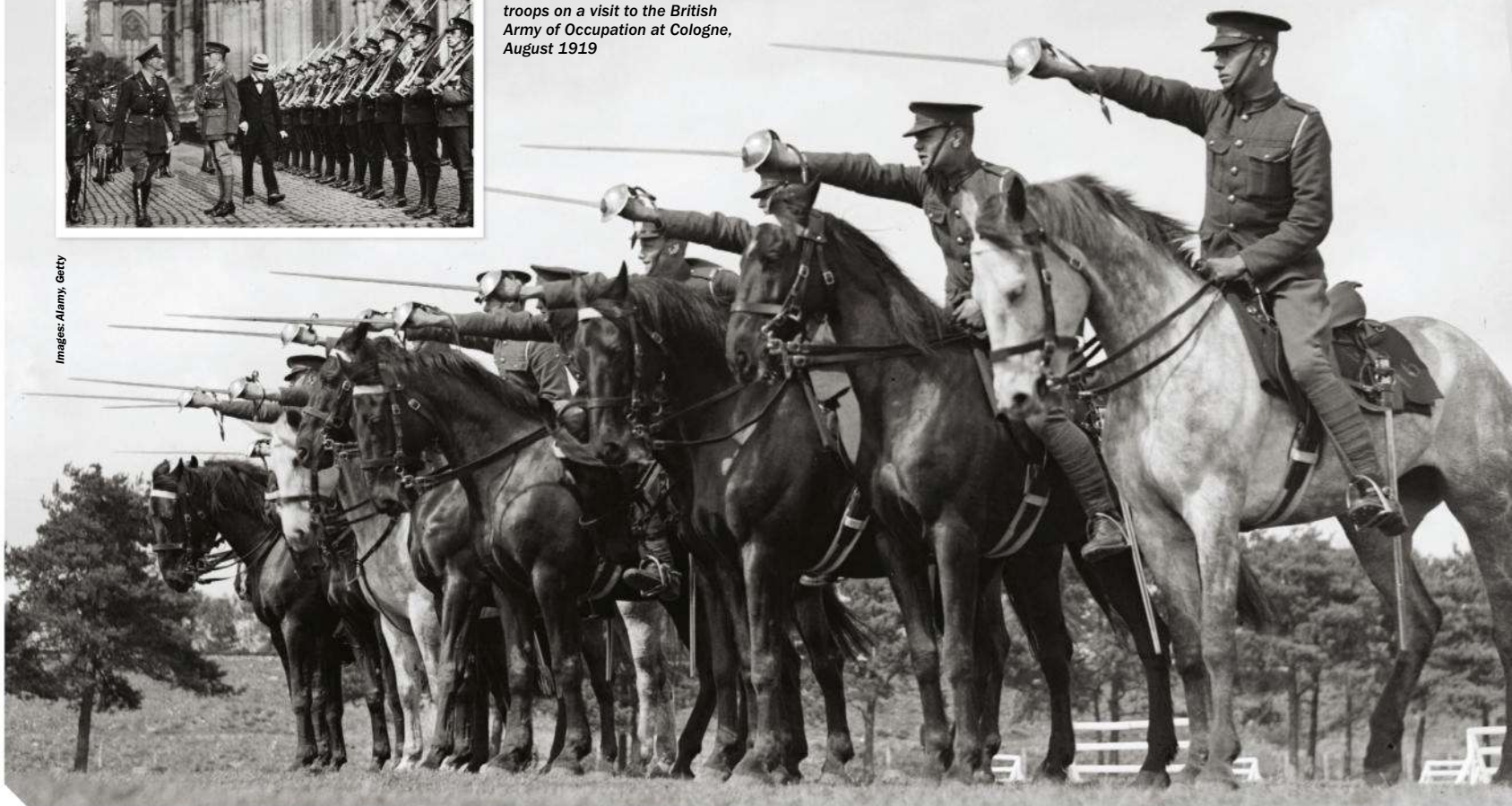
Visit ospreypublishing.com for more information.

Below: The Royal Horse Guards during training, 8 May 1933



Left: Winston Churchill inspects troops on a visit to the British Army of Occupation at Cologne, August 1919

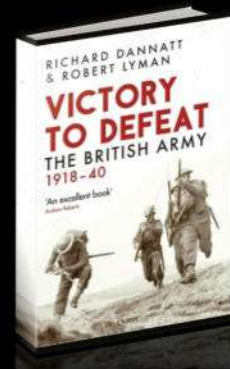
Images: Alamy, Getty



French and British troops taken prisoner by the Germans at Dunkirk in northern France, May 1940

VICTORY TO DEFEAT: THE BRITISH ARMY 1918-40

Is on sale now from
Osprey Publishing



Terms and conditions: The competition is open to UK entrants only. Under 18s must obtain parental consent to enter this competition and be able to demonstrate this to History of War's reasonable satisfaction. Answers must be received by 00:00GMT on 23/11/2023. The winner will be selected at random from all entries received and will be sent the prize free of charge. The prize is non-transferable and non-refundable. There is no cash alternative. For full terms and conditions, please go to www.futureplc.com/competition-rules/.

Q&A WITH

ANDY MCNAB

Historian Anthony Tucker-Jones spoke with the SAS legend about the life-and-death challenges facing today's clandestine special forces



Above: British Commandos in Afghanistan on a hunter-killer mission

Andy McNab needs no introduction as a writer and a former member of the SAS. He conducted covert operations for nine years with the regiment and when he left the British Army he was the most highly decorated serving soldier. His fame under a pen name was sealed by the ground-breaking book *Bravo Two Zero*, which recounted his involvement in an SAS mission in Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War. Overnight McNab's exploits became the stuff of legend. Since then he has forged a highly successful career as an author of both non-fiction and fiction books for all ages and as a security consultant.

In his latest book *The Rescue* he draws on his contacts and experiences to recount a desperate hostage recovery mission in Afghanistan in 2012. Although on a punishing promotion tour, he took time to speak to *History of War* about what makes him tick as an author and recount how he went from being anonymous to rubbing shoulders with Hollywood's elite. His time in Tinseltown was clearly quite an experience.

Although his books have made him a household name he remains acutely aware of the challenges facing today's special forces, as well as the unrelenting scrutiny they're under. McNab has little time for the damaging trend of dragging soldiers through the courts for alleged war crimes. "The complaints are unjust and completely insane," he commented, backing the special forces community.

Surprisingly, it turns out that far from being a strategic planner, McNab is very much a one-book-at-a-time kind of writer – though he confesses this might be about to change if his publisher gets their way.

You've had a long and distinguished career as a writer. In your wildest dreams when you were a young lad in the army did you ever imagine you would become a bestselling author?

Not even in the wildest of dreams! I left the SAS to work for a PMC or Private Military Company and thought that would be my life until 'I got dead' – note correct term! – or was too old to continue. But I was offered the opportunity to write about my experience in the Gulf, and

I thought, why not? *Bravo Two Zero* was going to be a one-off, but because of the worldwide success I was asked to write another, and again I thought, why not? I still have the same thought process and only have contracts for one book at a time, even though publishers always want three- or five-book deals.

Were you taken completely by surprise by the success of your debut book *Bravo Two Zero* and the follow-up *Immediate Action*? And how did you handle all the attention?

Totally. I had yet to learn how publishing worked and assumed *Bravo Two Zero* would sell OK because it was about the SAS, but nothing outstanding. Not even the publishers expected the book to be such a worldwide success. So when my second book *Immediate Action* was published, bookstores were selling copies as a loss leader because it brought non-traditional readers into their stores.

There must have been a sense of all your formative experiences coming full circle. Was it particularly satisfying to be able to draw on your

life as a soldier and a special operator to forge a second career?

Looking back at the transition, it is strange because I went from one extreme in the military to another in the media. Within a year of *Bravo Two Zero* being published, I was living in Los Angeles and working on [the movie] *Heat* with De Niro and Pacino.

Did you enjoy your brush with Hollywood?

It took a while for me to understand that the real world – if you can call Hollywood that – works very differently from the military. People don't do what they say they are supposed to or be where they should be. But what helped me survive the transition was keeping the same values instilled into me by the army since I was 16. Do what I say and be where you should be. These two seemingly small concepts helped me transition from one life to another and be known as reliable, giving me more opportunities.

Your latest book *The Rescue* explores the shadowy world of special forces operations in Afghanistan. The war there is now seen as highly controversial, but you don't shy away from the politics. In light of the Taliban seizing power again, do you feel the international community was wrong to have got involved in the first place?

That is a difficult one as there were two understandable reasons for the Afghanistan intervention after the September 11th attack. It was simply to get Bin Laden and close down AQ [al-Qaeda]. But politics dictate conflict; a prime example is Vietnam. Political situations escalate, and so mission creep sets in. This isn't the first example and will not be the last. Unfortunately, the suffering of troops in the battlespace is quickly forgotten as politics moves on to confronting China.

You always have a great eye for detail and the rhythm of war. You reference the Korengal Valley and Helmand Province, both of which turned out to be hotspots for Taliban activity. Do you think the British tactic of scattered section houses in Helmand was wise as they became the focus for relentless Taliban attacks? The American outposts in Korengal suffered a similar fate.

There were better tactics for this operation. Historically, the concept had been a successful one. Most wars are about real estate, so the theory was that ground can be dominated by having small FOBs or Forward Operating Bases, much like ink spots on blotting paper spreading their footprint. Unfortunately, the combat appreciation of the enemy's reaction wasn't as anticipated. However, I now have this view with hindsight; I also thought it would be a good tactic. Let's hope the lesson has been learnt and retained in both militaries.

In *The Rescue* you highlight the terrible dilemma the deployment of special forces faces. Essentially what are you prepared to sacrifice in order to achieve your objectives. This is a political decision, but it makes special forces operators and exceptional breed knowing every time they go into action something could go fatally wrong. Are the

SAS, SBS, SEALs, Delta Force and all the others good at what they do simply because of their training?

The simple answer is yes, but for the training to be efficient they need three human qualities, which can be hard to find in just one human. Physical and mental stamina and the ability to focus on nothing but the aim, the mission, the job, or whatever a unit calls it. If an SF operator has these three qualities, they can constantly advance using their training to achieve their purpose while adapting to their ever-changing situation. SF operators are not seven-foot monsters who can walk through walls. They are the people who lose.

When writing your books do you constantly have to be on your guard not to compromise operational security?

The UK's Ministry of Defence is involved. They check my manuscripts for anything comprising. It could be a piece of kit, a tactic or a location. They explain why, and I change the equipment, the name or the site, simple as that.

“WHEN THE REAL WORLD HEARS THE MILITARY TERM COMMAND AND CONTROL, THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS IN THE BATTLESPACE”

Many forces these days wear body cameras. This obviously helps with intelligence gathering and debriefs, but also provides evidence that can refute allegations of human rights abuses. In these politically charged times do you feel special forces have become increasingly hidebound by ever tougher rules of engagement?

Absolutely. The real world needs to learn the reality of conflict because their terms of reference are a never-ending stream of war films and sanitised media reports of the battlespace. Any nation requires its military to be as aggressive as possible. Not only to destroy the enemy as efficiently as possible but to achieve that while keeping themselves alive.

That is why any contact must be about Speed, Aggression and Violence of Action to succeed. When the real world hears the military term command and control, they do not understand what that means in the battlespace. The command to fight is about as far as any order goes once in the fight. Well-trained troops know what to do, and they know how to do it. Management is about taking control of the situation once the violence of action is over. Even junior NCOs are taught to just 'grip the team' after they have been fighting for their lives and they are in a primal mental state.

Abuses continue to happen in most conflicts, so would you agree that rules of engagement are necessary?

Of course, there are examples of illegal torture and killings in war. An example would be the torture and abuse of Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib. But that was an example of poorly trained troops and an even worse command structure that let the abuse continue.

The investigation into UKSF operations in Afghanistan is entirely different, and in the circumstance of war the complaints are unjust and completely insane.

The downside of these ever-changing terms of reference is that commanders at all levels could lose vital seconds when making decisions in the battlespace as they contemplate if their command may come back to hit them in the face a decade later. That will put troops' lives at even greater risk and diminish a nation's duty of care for its armed forces.

In your writing you are always at pains to make it clear that special operations are very much a team effort. I doubt many people realise just how many moving parts there are. What is your take on this?

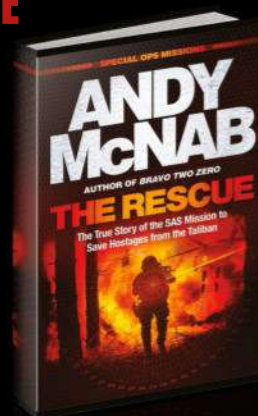
I agree with you – the real world doesn't understand how many different organisations make up the whole team for any SF operation. I think some of the answer lies in the question above. War TV/film [productions] tend to be 'tip of the spear' events because that's where the action and drama are. However, none of that would have happened if intelligence hadn't been gathered beforehand so that a half-decent plan could be put together. The most potent weapon in the battlespace is knowledge. I have shown that in *The Rescue* with many points of view. From the hostage-takers to the Taliban, from the CIA and SIS or MI6 operators to the different aircrews that gave support and to where the SF teams were waiting for the 'GO/NO GO', the Prime Minister's office and then the tip of the spear – the team's Speed, Aggression and Violence of Action.

You seem to be never short of ideas. What can your readers expect next?

Both books of this new series of SF accounts, *The Hunt* and *The Rescue*, have been well received. I have been asked to write another one, so I thought, why not? I'm looking at jobs outside Iraq and Afghanistan and discovering if they can be written about. It may also be time to give in to the publishers and sign a grown-up three-book deal!

THE RESCUE BY ANDY MCNAB

Andy McNab's new book *The Rescue: The True Story of the SAS Mission to Save Hostages from the Taliban* is out now, published by Welbeck



DISCOVER THE STORY OF THE BRUTAL BATTLE FOR NAZI GERMANY'S CAPITAL

With his plans crumbling around him in March 1945, Hitler now faced inevitable defeat. Discover how the Allies brought an end to the war in Europe and the downfall of history's most infamous dictator



Ordering is easy. Go online at:

magazinesdirect.com

Or get it from selected supermarkets & newsagents

N E X T M O N T H

CHURCHILL, STALIN & THE ARCTIC CONVOYS

Read how frosty relations between the unlikely allies threatened the perilous but critical North Sea supply route

**HISTORY
WAR**

Future PLC Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA

Editorial

Editor-in-Chief **Tim Williamson**
timothy.williamson@futurenet.com

Senior Designer **Curtis Fermoer-Dunman**

Production Editor **Iain Noble**

Senior Art Editor **Duncan Crook**

Staff Writer **Louis Hardiman**

Contributors

Jason Bell, Alex Bowers, Martyn Conterio, Stuart Hadaway, Michael E Haskew, James Holland, Miguel Miranda, Lawrence Paterson, Andrew Saunders, David Smith, Jon Trigg, Anthony Tucker-Jones

Photography

Alamy, Rocio Espin Piñar, Nicholas Forder, Getty
All copyrights and trademarks are recognised and respected

Advertising

Media packs are available on request

UK Commercial Director **Clare Dove**

clare.dove@futurenet.com

Advertising Sales Director **Lara Jaggon**

lara.jaggon@futurenet.com

07515 961911

Account Manager **Jagdeep Maan**

jagdeep.maana@futurenet.com

0330 390 6532

International Licensing

History of War is available for licensing and syndication. To find our more contact us at licensing@futurenet.com or view our available content at www.futurecontenthub.com.

Head of Print Licensing **Rachel Shaw**

licensing@futurenet.com

Subscriptions

Subscription delays: Disruption remains within the UK and international delivery networks. Allow 7 days before contacting us about late delivery at help@magazinesdirect.com

New subscribers: www.magazinesdirect.com

Renewal: www.mymagazine.co.uk

Phone orders: **0330 333 1113**

Customer service: **0330 333 4333**

Consumer Revenues Director **Sharon Todd**

Circulation

Head of Newstrade **Ben Oakden**

Production

Head of Production **Mark Constance**

Production Project Manager **Clare Scott**

Advertising Production Manager **Joanne Crosby**

Digital Editions Controller **Jason Hudson**

Production Manager **Nola Cokely**

Management

SVP Consumer **Kevin Addley**

Commercial Finance Director **Tom Swayne**

Managing Director **Dave Clutterbuck**

Head of Art & Design **Greg Whitaker**

Printed by William Gibbons & Sons Ltd

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU www.marketforce.co.uk For enquiries please email: mfcommunications@futurenet.com

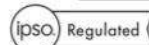
ISSN 2054-376X

We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from responsibly managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. The paper in this magazine was sourced and produced from sustainable managed forests, conforming to strict environmental and socioeconomic standards.

All contents © 2023 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used, stored, transmitted or reproduced in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/ services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any other changes or updates to them. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein.

If you submit material to us, you warrant that you own the material and/ or have the necessary rights/permissions to supply the material and you automatically grant Future and its licensees a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in any/all issues and/or editions of publications, in any format published worldwide and on associated websites, social media channels and associated products. Any material you submit is sent at your own risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents, subcontractors or licensees shall be liable for loss or damage. We assume all unsolicited material is for publication unless otherwise stated, and reserve the right to edit, amend, adapt all submissions.

History of War (ISSN 2054-376X USPS 23835) is published monthly with an extra issue in October by Future Publishing, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA, UK. The US annual subscription price is \$171.60. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named World Container Inc. 150-15, 183rd St, Jamaica, NY 11433, USA. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn NY 11256 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to History of War, Air Business Ltd, c/o World Container Inc 150-15, 183rd St, Jamaica, NY 11433, USA. Subscription records are maintained at Future Publishing, c/o Air Business Subscriptions, Rockwood House, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3DH, UK.



Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR) www.futureplc.com

Chief Executive Officer: **Jon Steinberg**
Non-Executive Chairman: **Richard Huntingford**
Chief Financial and Strategy Officer: **Penny Ladin-Brand**

Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244

ON SALE 23 NOVEMBER

AMERICAN POW STITCHWORK

This elaborate needlecraft picture, created by a captured Second World War pilot from the US Eighth Air Force, represents skill and tenacity under great strain



Colonel Henry Russell Spicer (later Major General) assumed command of the 357th Fighter Group on 17 February 1944. By the 19th, he had flown a P-51 Mustang for the first time, ultimately leading every group mission until 4 March 1944, when his aircraft was shot down by flak. Bailing out into the English Channel's unforgiving waters, he drifted for two days in a one-man dinghy, hoping in vain that Allied rescue efforts would find him before the Germans did. Unfortunately, having been carried ashore near Cherbourg in France – by that stage suffering from exposure and frostbite – the enemy stumbled upon him first.

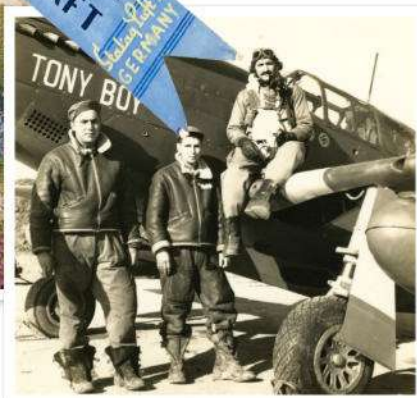
The downed American pilot was taken to Oberursel in Germany for interrogation and medical treatment. Following his recovery, he was then sent to Stalag Luft I on 24 March 1944. Spicer would become the Allied commanding officer of North 2 Compound, inspiring his fellow POWs by often challenging the German guards. According to one American prisoner, his tenacity "put a stronger backbone in every POW". But his boldness likewise drew unwelcome attention to him. Tried and convicted by the Nazis, Spicer received a sentence of six months in solitary confinement prior to execution by firing squad.

He remained strong in isolation. Provided with a stitchery kit from the American Red Cross, he used the materials to create an embroidered picture of an English garden. The beautifully elaborate design – now held at the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force in Pooler, Georgia, USA – shows a plethora of flowers in full bloom. Trees drape their intricately stitched leaves on both sides of the picture, while in the middle a trestle adorned with yet more flowers offers a quintessentially English feel to the artwork.

The piece would win first place for needlecraft at Stalag Luft I's POW art show, recognised with a ribbon that today sits alongside the artefact. As for Spicer, he would win his freedom on 1 May 1945, waking to find no captors after their hasty retreat from approaching Soviet soldiers the night before. Though his ordeal was over, he would be remembered for keeping Allied spirits high – as well as, of course, for his deft skills in stitch craft.



Spicer created this needlecraft expecting to be executed after solitary confinement



Left: Colonel Spicer is seated on the wing of his P-51 Mustang, 'Tony Boy'. Standing are his ground crew, Corporal Hamilton and Sergeant Currie

Above: Henry Russell Spicer used several different stitches, including the backstitch, split and stem stitches, chain and satin stitches, and French knots

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE



Colonel Spicer's needlecraft is part of the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force's collection. Boasting an array of exhibits, rare objects and photographs, the museum in Pooler, Georgia, USA, offers visitors the opportunity to experience the fascinating history of the Mighty Eighth Air Force.

www.mightyeighth.org

Advertisement

Car, home and travel insurance plus broadband,
breakdown cover and more. Get more info or
compare quotes, for over 40 products, at go.compare

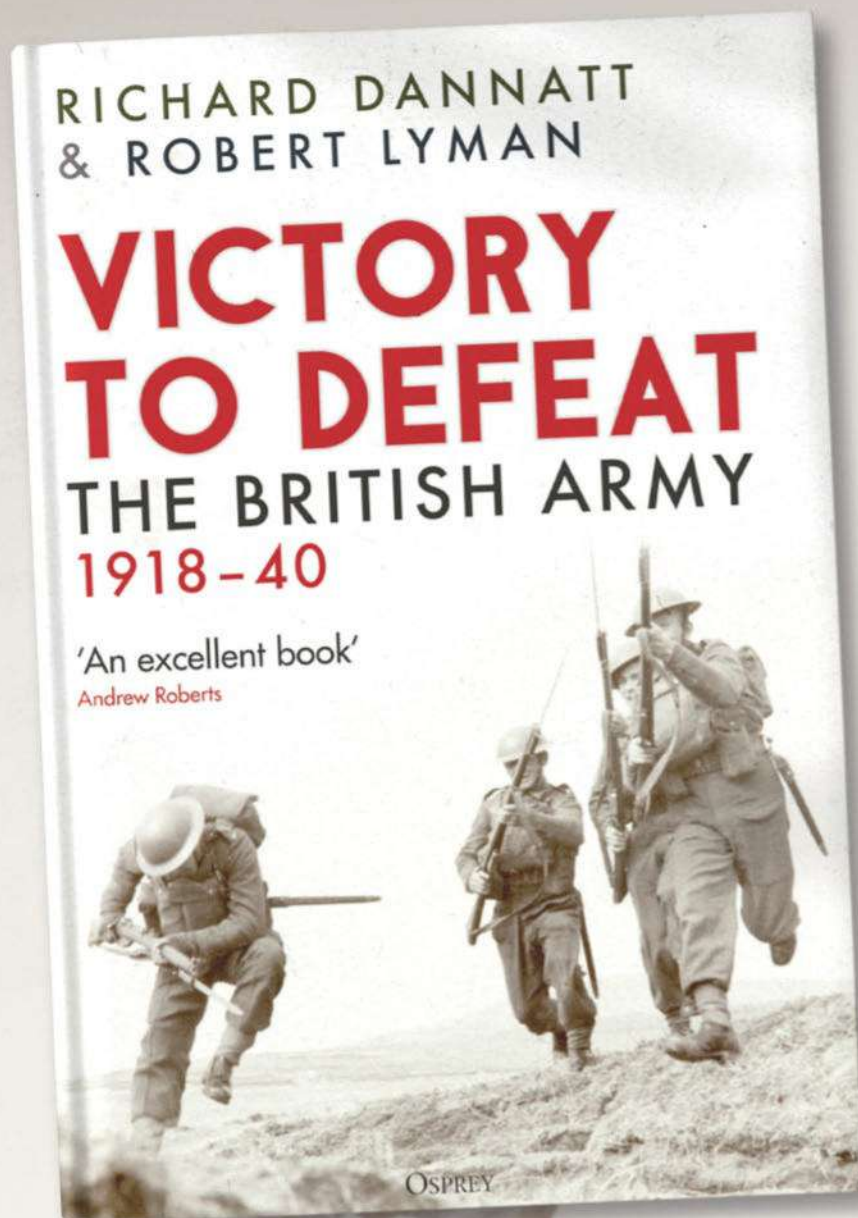
**WE'VE GOT
THE OPTIONS.
YOU MAKE THE
CHOICE.**

GO.
COMPARE

“ An excellent book... succinct, scholarly, convincing, and with the largest war since 1945 raging in Europe today, timely.

ANDREW ROBERTS

AUTHOR OF *CHURCHILL: WALKING WITH DESTINY*



A compelling history of the decline of an army from the triumph of victory in 1918 to defeat in 1940 and why this happened.

A cautionary tale for modern Britain.

OSPREY
PUBLISHING

AVAILABLE TO ORDER FROM ALL GOOD BOOKSHOPS
AND ONLINE AT WWW.OSPREYPUBLISHING.COM